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Contents

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following four studies were made in different contexts. One, *The National* Psalter *of Romanians* (2014), is a fragment from a doctoral research project regarding the history of the *Psalter* in Romanian language. The other three were performed in Cambridge, where that doctoral research led me, which gave me a wider perspective, though the studies retain an anchorage in the Eastern paradigm of Christianity.

*The Slavonic Translation of the Greek 'Catholi*c' was written during my stay in Cambridge in 2015. In the same year, *The Sense of the Biblical Love* was also conceived and presented at the Tyndale Fellowship Conferences, where I returned in 2022 to present *Did Judas Really 'Lift His Heel' against the Lord?*

C. P.

The Practical and Existential Sense of the Biblical Verb ἀγαπᾶν, as Explained by its Occurences in LXX

Abstract: The present essay is a foray into the depths of the mystery of love, with the means of biblical concordance. It doesn't pretend to exhaust the theme, instead it tries to elucidate some aspects of biblical love, seeking to outline the basic arguments for the possibility of a plenary engagement, which is not adulterated either by an overdose of the feelings, or by the selfishness mirrored in two. The *Bible* guides us towards such a plenary love, gradually defining it, even by the natural emotions of this world. Therefore, ἀγάπη is not a specialised term, but it covers the wide notion of an entirely human and rational love, yet one whose utility is judged from a perspective related to its benefits and its palpable proofs – and, as a result, expressing it requires the past tense, rather than present tense. This research was performed mostly with Western resources, just to offer grounds for an answer to a certain shallow tendency in Western (Protestant) culture that regards the mystical celibate as alienated from love – whereas it could be looked upon as a way of fulfilling a plenary form of love, in accordance with the standards of the *Old* and *New Testament*.

Key-words: *Eros* and *Agape*, the command of love, *Septuagint*, *Leviticus*, *Epistle of James*

The manner of understanding biblical love has implications for the translation of various scriptural passages, as well as for real life. If we look at Ps. 67/68:6/7, for instance, we see that a British traditional reading (in Protestant spirit) seems to suggest that God would occupy Himself with the marriage of those *in danger* of celibacy: "God setteth the solitary in families" (KJV), "God gives lonely people a family" (NIRV), and even with the

remarriage of the divorced, according to the French rendering of Segond[1], "Dieu donne une famille à ceux qui étaient abandonnés" (LSG), in interpreting the 'house', בַּיִת (LXX: οἶκος) as 'family', while the anchoritism is condemned by the Occidental and Masoretic sequel of the verse: "but the rebellious dwell in a dry land" (KJV); "Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land" (NAS); "les rebelles seuls habitent des lieux arides" (LSG). However, the traditional Eastern reading of the text[2] does not support such primacy of the conjugal love.

As for love towards God, things are not clear either, as can be seen from the reading of a *New Testament* passage[3] like Luke 7:36-50, where, in verse 47, Jesus says to the woman who anointed His feet with ointment: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; *for she loved much*" (KJV) – Gr. ὅτι ἠγάπησεν πολύ. On the face of it, the verb *she loved* may seem to be in a wrong tense here, because of either a mistranslation, or an ellipsis – as the note in NET Bible[4] explains. Yet perhaps the logic of this passage might be better understood with the help of another passage, to some extent similar (Mark 2:7-12[5]), where Jesus had to produce proof to those who were reasoning in their hearts: "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?" and He said: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately *he arose* (ἠγέρθη), took up the bed, and went forth before them all" (KJV). We can see here that an aorist was

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[1] Always strictly followed, in Romanian, by the Protestant translation of D. Cornilescu (CNS), as well.

[2] LXX: ὁ θεὸς κατοικίζει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ ἐξάγων πεπεδημένους ἐν ἀνδρείᾳ, ὁμοίως τοὺς παραπικραίνοντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν τάφοις. LXE: "God settles the solitary in a house; leading forth prisoners mightily, also them that act provokingly, even them that dwell in tombs."

[3] As a matter of fact, the passage which triggerred this investigation.

[4] Also included in Bible Works 9 software.

[5] See also Matthew 9:1-8 and Luke 5:17-26.

necessary, because it expressed a form of evidence. So we shouldn't rush to think that it's just an irrelevant Greek or Hebrew manner of speaking, since there clearly must be a *past tense*.

Now, let's look from another angle: how come love can be talked of in the past tense? Is it not eternal? By definition, is it not in the present tense? How odd to see that in the *Septuagint Psalms*[6] declarations of love towards God are made either in a past tense (indicative aorist) or in the future. "I have loved (ἠγάπησα) the Lord, [+ a REASON:] because he will hear (εἰσακούσεται) the voice of my supplication" (Psalms 114/116:1)[7], or "I will love thee (ἀγαπήσω σε), O Lord, my strength" (Psalms 17/18:1 – KJV). Love in present tense is only a rare exception in the *Bible* (which will be discussed later), and we already see that this bears a relation to giving proof or reasons[8].

Let's imagine how this kind of declarations would sound to a contemporary woman: – *Do you love me, darling?* – *I will love you.* Or: – *I loved you.* (Or: *I loved you. Marry me.*) In this sphere, the suitable approach is obviously the one expressed in the well-known song of Elvis Presley: "It's Now Or Never"[9]. In other words, in the usual love between man and woman, it is the present that matters. On the distinction between these two kinds of love there is also an entire genre of literature. Let's have a look at some of the most important of its approaches.

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[6] Which for the Eastern Church is still an authentic *Jewis*-made version.

[7] The literal translation. However, Brenton's version reads here: "I am well pleased, because the Lord will hearken to the voice of my supplication" (Ps. 116:1 – LXE). LXX (Ps. 113:26): ἠγάπησα ὅτι εἰσακούσεται κύριος τῆς φωνῆς τῆς δεήσεώς μου.

[8] Arguments or justifications, which I will continue to highlight below, in order to point out the practical framework.

[9] "It's now or never,/ come hold me tight/ Kiss me my darling,/ be mine tonight/ Tomorrow will be too late,/ *it's now or never/ My love won't wait.*"

Denis de Rougemont, in his influential *L'amour et l'occident* analyses myths and love stories like Tristram's and Romeo's, in comparison to the *Gospel*. He jumps to the paradoxical conclusions (a little bit far-fetched, in my opinion) that the courtly love of the troubadours is somehow connected with the heresy of cathares ("La mistique d'Occident est une autre passion dont le langage métaphorique est parfois étrangement semblable à celui de l'amour courtois", Rougemont 1939, 210) and that any form of "mysticism" (for him, something not serious) derives, by inversion, from the pagan worship of Eros (but he mentions only Meister Eckhart as example of dark mystic bachelor). He has a very interesting and well written final chapter (*Éros sauvé par Agapè*), which has been referred to by many other important scholars, in which he explains:

> Alors l'amour de charité, l'amour chrétien, qui est Agapè, paraît enfin dans sa pleine stature: il est l'affirmation de l'être. Et c'est Éros, l'amour-passion, l'amour païen, qui a répandu dans notre monde occidental le poison de l'ascèse idéaliste. [...] Éros s'asservit à la mort parce qu'il veut exalter la vie au-dessus de notre condition finie et limitée de créatures. [...] Agapè sait que la vie terrestre et temporelle ne mérite pas d'être adorée, ni même tuée, mais peut être acceptée dans l'obéissance à l'Éternel. [...] L'homme naturel était condamné à croire Éros, c'est-à-dire à se confier dans son désir le plus puissant, à lui demander la délivrance. [...] Et qu'aurions-nous alors à craindre du désir? Cela seulement: qu'il nous détourne d'obéir. Mais il perd sa puissance absolue quand nous cessons de le diviniser. Et c'est ce qu'atteste l'expérience de la fidélité dans le mariage. Car cette fidélité se fonde justement sur le refus initial et jure de «cultiver» les illusions de la passion, de leur rendre un culte secret, et d'en attendre un mystérieux surcroît de vie. [...] L'exercice de la fidélité envers une femme accoutume à considérer les autres femmes d'une manière tout a fait nouvelle, inconnue du monde de l'Eros: comme des personnes, non plus comme des reflets ou des objets. (Rougemont 1939, 312-315)

Apart from his interesting observations and his intention to defend Christianity (which, however, he boils down to a *triomphe d'Agape sur Eros*), the problem is that it almost seems like Christ

came to Earth and died on the cross just to save Mr. Rougemont from divorce – not to give us the eternal life, where there will be no marriage. In that case, what about the brotherly *agape* or the *agape* between man and God, if *agape* is conceived only as reduced to family?

Another important book, *The Four Loves*, by the equally influential (in various fields) C. S. Lewis, divides *love* into four, according to the four related Greek verbs: Besides ἐράω/ἔραομαι and ἀγαπάω (referring to charity), he also mentions φιλέω (referring to friendship) and στέργω (referring to affection, „especially of parents to offspring", Lewis 1960, 42) – rather a case of excessive respect for the original language of the Revelation. He too has an excellent writing style and brilliant observations, yet the chapter about *agape* (or *charity)* is (not surprisingly) the shortest and the most conventional. Lewis is very careful to say that "the act of Venus is not too trivial to be transformed in a work of Charity" (Lewis 1960, 152) and to disagree with the "medieval guides" because they were all celibates, and therefore couldn't understand Eros and sexuality (*ibid.*, 112). In fact, he too tries to describe, like Denis de Rougemont, whom he quotes, *agape* simply as perfection in marriage[10].

Another important book concerning the topic is *Agape and Eros*, by Anders Nygren – who, as a Professor of Systematic Theology, wrote a serious three volume treatise about what he calls "the Christian idea of love" (Nygren 1953, 27), or "the idea

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[10] However, one of his remarks might be relevant for our investigation: he distinguishes between the Need-love (of a child for his mother) and the Gift-love (of a man who works for the well being of his family) – both (of them)/equally legitimate (Lewis 1960, 9). He notes (*ibid.*, 21) that "when Need-pleasures are in question we tend to make statements in the past tense. The thirsty man who has just drunk off a tumbler of water may say, *By Jove, I wanted that*" (like in our case). The love between God and man also has the form of a Need-love, since man was created to be a son of God, and God became somehow the Son of mankind.

of Agape in Christianity" (*ibid.*, 41) – which is "a technical term introduced by Paul" (*ibid.*, 114). He clearly separates it from *eros*, which, in "fundamental contrast" to *agape* (*ibid.*, 200), is "acquisitive and egocentric" (*ibid.*, 175, 179), stating that *eros* and *agape* belong to two entirely separate spiritual worlds, and "they do not represent the same value in their respective contexts, so that they cannot in any circumstances by rightly substituted for one another" (*ibid.*, 31) – in this, relying on the "fact that when the New Testament speaks of love it makes large use of the word *agape*, but consistently avoids the word *eros*" (*ibid.*, 33)[11] (only resting upon *New Testament* Greek – due to an excessive conception that imagines a/of a sort of linguistic isle).

D. A. Carson takes a closer look at biblical occurrences, with the purpose of contradicting Lewis and Nygren, who "have tried to assign the love of God and, derivatively, Christian love to one particular word group", and have wrongly discriminated between ἐράω, as referring to "sexual" or "erotic love", φιλέω, as referring to "emotional love" (of "friendship and feeling"), and ἀγαπάω, referring to "willed love", or "willed self-sacrifice for the good of another", which, by contrast would have "no emotional component, however generous" (Carson 2000, 30[12]). Carson doesn't make the Occidental linguistic dichotomy between *Old Testament* and *New Testament*, and his analysis reveals that in LXX ἀγαπάω is used even for the "vicious act, transparently sexual", of Amnon[13], and in the *New Testament*

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[11] Eventually, as a bishop, he tries to make love denominationally correct (*agape* can only be found within his own denomination).

[12] He also adds (Carson 2000, 20-21) that love means choosing, like in Deut. 10:14-15, so this is the way we should understand Jesus' love for the Church in Eph. 5:25 – from where he, too, comes to linking biblical love with Protestantism.

[13] See the story of what appears to be the rape of his half-sister Temar in 2 Sam. 13. On the other hand, ἐράω can be found in places more honourable than that – like Prov. 4:6 (the generic love for wisdom), or Est. 2:17 (king

ἀγαπάω is used interchangeably with φιλέω: the Father's love for the Son is expressed by both verbs (John 3:35 and 5:20). In Luke 22:47, even Judas *loves* Jesus (as φιλέω is used to represent its second meaning, of *kissing*) (*ibid.*, 31), while in 2 Tim. 4:10 Paul blames the bad *love* (expressed by ἀγάπη) towards this world. Therefore, he notes the commonsensical fact that Greek dictionaries have nothing to do with the *nature of love* (since the verbs tend to be mixed up in the *Bible*), so, even though ἀγαπάω word group may had been selected to be filled with a special signification because it was less used, he disputes that it is a technical term which could be reduced to willed altruism (as can be seen in 1 Cor. 13), while also rejecting the practice of "importing the entire semantic range of a word into that word in a particular context" (Carson 2000, 31-33). He exemplifies this with the very convention of sentimentalizing God (*ibid.*, 14) in Protestant churches (where God's love became predictable in the time of Luther and Calvin), which led to the situation where "the widely diseminated belief in the love of God is set with increasing frequency in some matrix other than biblical theology" (*ibid.*, 10).

Indeed, many scholars treat love as an abstract concept (identified with a general Christianity), completely separated from its Christian context, analysed in the same way as any pagan term, except that it formally relies on the idea that "God is love" (1 John 4: 8, 16), and not a generic love, but ἀγάπη-love, which, because it is a commandment, must be some sort of general social duty.

As to truly define love is in fact impossible (once we accepted that God Himself is love), the best thing we can do is look at what *Scripture* teaches us about it, gradually defining the concept, and making clearer the meaning of commands such as: "Love thy God" (Deut. 6:5) and "Love thy neighbour" (Lev. 19:18).

Artaxerxes' love for Esther), where the same Hebrew verb אָהַב is used, and the same framework of proofs as for the ἀγαπᾶν.

Love in Pentateuch

Genesis begins by illustrating ἀγαπάω (ἀγαπᾶν) through man's most important but ordinary and natural desires and pleasures.

A . *Love for the offspring*[14]

1. "And He said, Take thy son, the beloved one, whom thou hast loved [τὸν υἱόν σου τὸν ἀγαπητόν ὃν ἠγάπησας (LXX)[15]], Isaac, and go into the high land, and offer him there for a whole-burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Gen. 22:2 – LXE).

2. "And Isaac loved (ἠγάπησεν) Esau, [+a *REASON*:] *because he did eat of his venison,* but Rebekah loved (ἠγάπα) Jacob" (Gen. 25:28 – KJV) – the difference from the Hebrew verb אָהַב is minor, but here LXX differs in the sense that it tries to theologically shrink from saying that Isaac simply *loved* a food (see Gen. 27:4, 9 and 14), so it employs φιλέω.

3. "Now Israel loved (ἠγάπα) Joseph more than all his children, because [+*REASON* – at least according to his brothers:] he was the son of his old age and [a *PROOF*:] he made him a coat of many colours" (Gen. 37:3 – KJV)[16].

B. *The love towards the woman is introduced as a reflection of the same type of love above*

1. "And [*PROOF*:] Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her (ἠγάπησεν αὐτήν): and [*REASON*:] Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (Gen. 24:67 – KJV). Thus, the love of Isaac for his woman Rebecca is proven by the place she is given (the tent of his mother). As a comparison, one couldn't say that Adam does love Eve. She is simply there, built to be naturally loved. Eve even lost something when she was *known* (rather a disparaging word, which sounds as if he has found out –

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[14] Which is not στοργή, like in Lewis' view.

[15] MT: אֲשֶׁר־אָהַבְתָּ. KJV: "whom thou lovest".

[16] Something similar, in Gen. 44:20.

impetuously – what she was trying to hide, akin to a sort of emptiness: now she is no longer surprising for Adam). Isaac didnt *know* Rebecca (his second mother), but *loved* her.

2. "And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days [*PROOF:*], for the love he had to her" (παρὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτὸν αὐτήν – LXX) (Gen. 29:20 – KJV).

3. "And Leah conceived, and [*REASON:*] bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me" (νῦν με ἀγαπήσει ὁ ἀνήρ μου) (Gen. 29:32 – KJV).

4. After humbling Dinah by laying with her, the soul of Shechem "clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved (ἠγάπησεν) the damsel, and [*PROOF:*] spake kindly unto the damsel. And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife" (Gen. 34:2-4 – KJV).

After these examples of natural love, before giving the commandment of love, the book of *Exodus* teaches us how profitable it is to love God, Who describes Himself as [*REASON:*] "shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me (τοῖς ἀγαπῶσίν με), and [*PROOF:*] keep My commandments" (Ex. 20:6 – KJV).

In contrast, we are also shown how man can excessively invest his natural love (instead of it being a pedagogue to the divine – and saving – love): we are given the example of a man who loves his kind master, his lovely wife and children more than his own liberty. "And if the servant shall plainly say: I love (ἠγάπηκα) my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free" (Ex. 21:5 – KJV) – his ear was to be pierced, so that it wouldn't hear words about freedom anymore, as a Patristic commentary explains[17]).

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[17] (By a monk.) "Similarly, when a slave has come to love his master and his own wife and children, he may reject true freedom because of his bonds of physical kinship ; and so he becomes a slave for ever, allowing his ear to be

We can see that all loves are considered of the same nature – as the soul of man is one. So the first and main danger for man's soul is loving others too much, and not being selfish enough to preserve his own pursuit for the good.

The opposite danger, too much selfishness, is shown as well in the next book, *Leviticus*. Here we find the commandment: ἀγαπήσεις αὐτὸν (τὸν πλησίον σου) ὡς σεαυτόν, given against two types of such excesses:

1. *Hate*: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people [*COUNTERPROOF*], but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Lev. 19:18 – KJV).

2. *Lack of care for the vulnerable and the weak*: "But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you [*PROOF*], and thou shalt love him as thyself" (Lev. 19:34 – KJV). Here, the exegetes have noticed that the word *neighbour* "refers to a wide range of persons with whom Israel would have had relationships". "The persons Israel is obligated to care for" were described as: the *fellow citizen*, the *neighbour*, the *labourer*, the *poor*, the *alien*, the *deaf* and the *blind*[18].

In the next book, *Deuteronomy*, we are finally given *the love for God* as a commandment – in close connection with the previous one (of loving the neighbour) – without the latter, the former could have been misleading, misunderstood and misdosed. Only if we love God (and God's image in our neighbour) will we know to share with the neighbor *our good*, not *our evil or sin*

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pierced through with an awl. He will never hear the word that can set him free, but will remain perpetually a slave in his love for present things." (Neilos the Ascetic 1979, 236.)

[18] Balentine 2000, 165. He also says that "the word *love* implies both attitude and act; one must not only feel love but also act in ways that translate love into concrete deeds." Atkinson (1965, 108) adds that "In *Old Testament* days the neighbour was opposed to the enemy and it is easy to see in the very words of the present verse that he was limited to «the children of thy people»". But only under the *Gospel* all limitation are "swept away" and „this commandment applied internationally" (*ibid.*, 108).

(according to Ben Azzai – see Milgrom 2000, 1656 and Balentine 2002, 165-166).

First of all, we are shown that God loved first:

> The Lord chose your fathers to love (ἀγαπᾶν) them, and [*PROOF*:] He chose out their seed after them, even you, beyond all nations, as at this day [...] executing judgment for the stranger and orphan and widow, and He loves (ἀγαπᾷ)[19] the stranger [*PROOF*:] to give him food and raiment (Deut. 10:15, 18 –LXE).

The man's answer, therefore, is supposed to be commensurate:

> **3a.** Therefore thou shalt love (ἀγαπήσεις) the Lord thy God, and [*PROOF*:] shalt observe his appointments, and his ordinances, and his commandments, and his judgments, always [...]. **3b.** Now if ye will indeed hearken to all the commands which I charge thee this day, to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord thy God, and [*PROOF*:] to serve him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul [...]. **3c.** If ye will indeed hearken to all these commands, which I charge thee to observe this day, to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord our God, and [*PROOF*:] to walk in all his ways, and to cleave close to him. (Deut. 11:1, 13, 22 – LXE)

Moreover, in His philantropy, God offers additional reward for man's answer:

> **4a.** If thou shalt hearken to do all these commands, which I charge thee this day, to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord thy God, [*PROOF*:] to walk in all his ways continually, [*REWARD*:] thou shalt add for thyself yet three cities to these three. **4b.** And the Lord shall purge thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, [*REWARD*:] that thou mayest live. (Deut. 19:9, 30:6 – LXE)

And likewise, in *Joshua*, the meaning of the received command of love is developed in its full content.

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[19] As regards to God, the present tense, which denotes continuous or repeated action, will do equally well.

1. But take great heed to do the commands and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you to do; to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord our God, [*PROOF*:] to walk in all his ways, to keep his commands, and to cleave to him, and serve him with all your mind, and with all your soul. **2.** And take ye great heed to love (ἀγαπᾶν) the Lord our God. [*COUNTERPROOF*] For if ye shall turn aside and attach yourselves to these nations that are left with you, and make marriages with them, and become mingled with them and they with you... (Jos. 22:5, 23:11-12 – LXE)

Love as performance

As it was observed, love can be commanded like that because it signifies not only an emotion or attitude, but also deeds. With respect to the neighbour, the command means *do good unto him as you would do for yourself*, actively seeking the good of your brother. In fact, in biblical contexts, love also "carries precise legal meaning: preference and promotion to an exclusive status of primacy" – as can be seen in the case of the natural paradigm of love (regarding multiple wives). While its antonym, hate, denotes "the legal status of divorce. One's love towards one's lord or spouse requires some form of contractual obligation, whereas hate involves a formal renunciation of such responsibility" (Milgrom 2000, 1653-1654[20]). Following the same pattern, *Bible* is making itself increasingly clear about the content of love between man and God. Since any claimed love must always be supported by some practical evidence, man loves God *and* serves Him and obeys His commandments, while

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[20] There, concerning Lev. 19:18 and 34, he also says: „How can love be commanded? The answer simply is that the verb *ahab* signifies not only an emotion or attitude, but also deeds." Actually, the love that *Deuteronomy* speaks about is a "covenantal love", like in *Genesis* 29:30-33, when Jacob "loves" Rachel and "hates" Leah, and "the reference is to the legal status of the two wives rather than Jacob's emotion toward them". The author also notes that every time the Hebrew *'ahab* takes the preposition *le*, "'*ahab lĕ* implies doing, not feeling". So when (in verses 33-34) "applied to the alien, it means to do him good, to treat him kindly".

God loves man *and* protects him with His mighty hand – therefore, a most profitable contract and a compelling choice for any free man.

Since it must always be conceived in this framework of evidence, love is necessarily talked about in a past tense. The Hebrew suffix conjugation *qatal* points to "the past time", to "a completed action, and expresses a fact" (see MIBH, 82), being almost always translated into Greek by the *punctiliniar* aorist (while *yiktol* is translated mostly by future). In his investigation of the verbal aspect, Buist Fanning adds a useful distinction between verbs that are "activities" and "performances", or, as he puts it, "actions which are *unbounded*" (activities) and "actions which are *bounded*" (performances): "the difference between bounded and unbounded expressions focuses on whether the expression includes a limit or terminus for the action or not", "a terminal point at which the action is *finished*, not just *ended*" (Fanning 1990, 140-141). His only error is that he includes biblical ἀγαπάω among the "verbs of active cognition, mental attitude, or emotional state" (*ibid.*, 145). Actually, under his own terms, the biblical, or 'covenantal love' falls into the category of performances[21] (best described in past tense). The *Historical Books*, *Psalms and Prophetes* never allow us to think love is a mere emotional state or an empty word. In *Malachi* for instance, God can be even asked how did He show His love:

> I have loved you (ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς), saith the Lord. And ye said, Wherein hast thou loved us (ἐν τίνι ἠγάπησας ἡμᾶς)? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and hated Esau (ἠγάπησα τὸν Ιακωβ, τὸν δε Ησαυ ἐμίσησα) and [*COUNTERPROOF:*] laid waste his borders, and made his heritage as dwellings of the wilderness? (Mal. 1:2-3 – LXE)

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[21] However, in a personal conversation we had, he admitted this – accepting that „there comes a moment when love must be proven".

A consequence of the identity in nature of all loves[22] is that since (as we saw in Deut. 11:3 and Josh. 22:5) what is required from us is to love God with all heart – and, as Ben Azzai interprets it, *we are all one body*[23] –, there will be no room left in our heart but to love others as ourselves. *Bible* gives us some relevant examples of men who deviated from this equilibrium framework.

> And it came to pass after this that he loved (ἠγάπησεν) a woman in Alsorech, and her name was Dalida [...] And Dalida said to Sampson, How sayest thou, I love thee (more rigorously: I loved thee – ἠγάπηκά σε), when thy heart is not with me? this third time thou hast deceived me, and hast not told me wherein is thy great strength. (Judg. 16:4, 15 – LXE)

> Solomon loved (ἠγάπησεν) the Lord, so as to [*PROOF:*] walk in the ordinances of David his father [...] [*But, in the same time,*] of the nations concerning whom the Lord forbade the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall not go in to them, and they shall not come in to you, lest they turn away your hearts after their idols: Solomon clave to these in love (τοῦ ἀγαπῆσαι) (1Kings 3:3, 11:2 – LXE).

Of course, there exists for man even a descent to a sinful ἀγάπη, that is only used in present indicative form (as in the case of Amnon, mentioned above): "And he said to him, What ails thee that thou art thus weak? O son of the king, morning by morning? wilt thou not tell me? and Ammon said, I love (ἀγαπῶ) Themar the sister of my brother Abessalom"(2 Sam. 13:4 – LXE). To the kind master, the wife or other women, the children, we could also add friends, and even the poor "lame

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[22] Which can sometimes make God *jealous* (Ex. 20:5, Ez. 36:6 and so on).

[23] "First, make such a (and every) person aware of the fact that he is of ultimate worth because he bears the likeness of God" – see Milgrom 2000, 1656. And E. Ullendorf even suggested that *as yourself* (kāmôkā) would be a brachylogy for *he is yourself*, and a version of the *Bible* (NEB) reflects his view – see *ibid.*, 1655.

and blind" – David's enemies, in that they appeal to his feelings in order to deter him from doing his duty (2 Sam. 5:8).

David and Psalms

So there can also exist worldly incomplete loves (based on various reasons, more or less strong). David is loved by Saul (1 Sam. 16:21), Jonathan (18:1), Michal (18:20), and all Israel, "because he led them in their campaigns" (18:16 – LXE). And David calls Saul and Jonathan: "Saul and Jonathan, the beloved (οἱ ἠγαπημένοι) and the beautiful" (2 Sam. 1:23 – LXE), saying, about Jonathan (2 Sam. 1:26): "I am grieved for thee, my brother Jonathan; thou wast very lovely to me; thy love to me was wonderful beyond the love of women" (ἡ ἀγάπησίς σου ἐμοὶ ὑπὲρ ἀγάπησιν γυναικῶν) – a comparison only possible if there is a similarity of kind between the respective loves (which differ in degree).

As for David himself, he somehow anticipates the renewed commandment of Christ, reaching a superior and noble love, beyond direct reasons:

> For as much as thou lovest them that hate thee, and hatest them that love thee (τοῦ ἀγαπᾶν τοὺς μισοῦντάς σε καὶ μισεῖν τοὺς ἀγαπῶντάς σε); and [*alleged* PROOF:] thou hast this day declared, that thy princes and thy servants are nothing in thy sight: for I know this day, that if Abessalom were alive, and all of us dead to-day, then it would have been right in thy sight. (2 Sam. 19:6 – LXE)

In the Psalms, love finally attains conceptualization: besides the direct declaration of love mentioned above (Ps. 17/18:1, 114/116:1), we also read that God loves concepts like *righteousness* and *justice*, and hates *wickedness*, while man loves God's *law*, God's *commandments*, God's *salvation* and *truth*. In these terms, the two risks for man are to love vain things: "O ye sons of men, how long will ye be slow of heart? wherefore do

ye love (ἀγαπᾶτε) vanity, and seek falsehood?" (Ps. 4:2 – LXE)[24], and ultimately, even bad things: "thou hast loved (ἠγάπησας) wickedness more than goodness; unrighteousness better than to speak righteousness" (Ps. 52:3 – LXE); or, on the other hand, to love ἐν τῷ στόματι, without the required proofs: "they loved Him (*only*) with their mouth (ἠγάπησαν αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῶν), and lied to Him with their tongue" (Ps. 77/78:36 – LXE[25]).

New Testament as an epilogue

Jesus says that the two *agapes*, towards God and the neighbour, are the essence of the Law. The verb ἀγαπᾶν is still used in the same way in the NT: in the past tense – with marginal (mostly negative) exceptions. Peter did not dare to answer Jesus, in the present, ἀγαπῶ σε, but φιλῶ σε (John 21:15 – KJV), when he couldn't show any evidence for it: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me (ἀγαπᾷς με) more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee (φιλῶ σε)".

In *James' Epistle* we find again, probably the most clearly expressed and practical conception of the love commanded in the *Old Testament*. The brother of the Lord, who, like Jude and Matthew, wrote for the Jews and is a non-dogmatic author (Sadler 1895, xii)[26], invokes "the royal law" (James 2:8, which quotes Lev. 19:18)[27], against Christians who show favoritism

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[24] Here, the present tense is appropriate, due to the worldly context.

[25] Here, Rahlfs' edition of *Septuagint* reads ἠπάτησαν, 'deceived', without even signalling out that back in *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus* we have ἠγάπησαν (most probably, the correct reading).

[26] Which is natural, since it would have sounded weirder for James to say *my brother made the heavens and earth*, while it was more convenient for him to say: *my brother taught us virtue*.

[27] He also uses thrice ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί ('my beloved brethren'– KJV) which may seem an equivalent to a formal greeting, 'my fellows', or as a

towards the rich, and in this way "despise the poor" (2:6), even though they bless God with their tongue (3:9). In his view, those who really obey the *royal law* shouldn't be deceived by their own desires (1:15), shouldn't curse men (3: 9) or boast and ignore God (4:13). James' theme is *defiance of the tyranny of the present*, by all those who act as "lovers of God" (1:12), according to "the law of liberty" (1:25). His call for converting those who "err from the truth" (5:19)[28] refers to this very *truth* that this world "withers" like grass, while "every good gift is from above" (1:11, 17 – KJV).

Instead of a conclusion, we could say that the true biblical virtue of love consists of freely and consciously choosing to do *works* of love[29] within the framework of an eternal contract with God, which by itself sets man free from any reasons for wrong loves, bad desires, needs and worries, – meaning there cannot be anything like *Now or never!* – since, as an offspring of God, he is entitled to everything, and can make decisions based on long term value. The lover of God cannot be bullied by anyone into doing anything. Perhaps in this light, we can better understand why even the divine Lover Himself, Jesus, puts no pressure on the sinful woman in Luke 7, but waits for her to bring out the fruits of her love (at a time of her choice), so that then He would say, in the past tense: "She *loved* much"[30].

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mark of a transition to new subject matter (Hartin 2003, 95), which introduces a new topic (Moo 2000, 81 and Loh/Hatton 1997, 41) or even "gentle" and "silken words" (Manton 1842, 90). Yet, keeping in mind who the author is – the Just himself, who was tempted by telling him "thou respectest not persons", and who gave testimony of Jesus, being killed by the Scribes and Pharisees, according to the Hegesippus' chronicle preserved by Eusebius (*History*, II, 23 – *apud* Sadler 1895, viii-ix) – he may be credited with the proper sense of his words.

[28] James gave such an example by his own powerful testimony that he made all the Jews believe the siege of Jerusalem was caused by his killing (*ibid.*).

[29] Or, works of *Gift-love*, as Lewis would put it.

[30] Like the thirsty man who would say: "O, how I *needed* this!" – satisfied by his glass of water.

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Did Judas Really *Lift His Heel against the Lord*? What the Bible Tells about His Guilt

Abstract: The former apostle Judas Iscariot was portrayed by the Gospels as the archetypal traitor, as typified by a passage from Psalm 41/40:10 which John 13:18 quoted explicitly. Traditionally, translations of the passage say that Judas 'lifted up his heel against' the Lord. A more thorough approach may suggest that behind the violent phrase might be a mere calque and a stylistic Hebraism (leading to frequent misinterpretations of the verse). In the Psalm John quotes, the translator of Septuagint rendered the Hebrew for 'heel' by the Greek for 'craft', since he saw there a metonymy describing a nonviolent meaning. According to that wider meaning, which goes beyond the literal sense (the anatomical back part of the foot), the 'heel' denoted the notion of deceiving someone (for instance, by grasping someone by that anatomical part). Hence, one could question what the real meaning of the quotation was: should we understand that the guilt of the fallen disciple (called 'devil' by Lord – John 13:2; see also 12:27) related to an act of violence? An extensive analysis of the facts doesn't show support this view. Or was the verse in fact mistranslated, with its original meaning referring instead to a lesser form of treason or act of moral dishonesty? From this angle, there are sufficient grounds in the Patristic and modern Western exegesis for questioning the traditional translations.

Key-words: Judas, heel, LXX and MT, NT *Psalms* quotations, Johannine Ethics

1. The Problem. The interpretation as violence and its weak explanations

1.1. Introduction

On the face of it, the rare phrase in the verse John 13:18 (*He that eateth bread with me* <u>hath lifted up his heel against</u> *me* – KJV) may seem to describe an act of pure violence. In fact, it is so frequently explained this way that it has become the standard interpretation. Here are a few examples, among others: "«To lift up the heel» against anyone is to offer him brutal violence" J.H. Bernard (1929, 468) says. "The notion is that of brute violence *(and not of the cunning of the wrestler)*", B. F. Westcott and A. Westcott (1908, 153) affirm. Some might consider this could easily fit into NT ethical framework, by associating it with Jesus's *central* message of *nonresistance, combined with suffering and submitting even to death[1]*. However, we will show there are no valid grounds for associating this passage with the theme of accepting suffering violence[2], or, if associated, that it answers no specific purpose.

1.2. Foot or heel?

Let's scrutinise the arguments for the violent interpretation. *The International Standard Bible Enciclopaedia* (1915, II, 1397, article by Morris O. Evans), uses the verb as proof that the meaning of the word „heel" is: *violence and brutality* – the author supports the idea with two other OT verses: Ps. 36 (35):12 and Jos. 10:24. However, upon closer inspection, the two examples cannot uphold this definition.

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[1] As put by Hays (1996, 178).
[2] Rather than inflicting it – Hays, 1996, 332.

The first one, Ps. 36 (35):12:

> *Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me.* (KJV)
> *Let not the foot of arrogance come upon me, nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.* (ESV)
> μὴ ἐλθέτω μοι ποὺς ὑπερηφανίας καὶ χεὶρ ἁμαρτωλῶν μὴ σαλεύσαι με[3]
>
> אַל־תְּבוֹאֵנִי רֶגֶל גַּאֲוָה וְיַד־רְשָׁעִים אַל־תְּנִדֵנִי:

In fact, as we can see, both the Septuagint and the Masoretic Text use another word here: *foot* (ποὺς/רֶגֶל). A better explanation for the mention of the body part might be the suggestion of a *visual* (undesirable) *contact* with the oppressors. (Likewise, we could also have a desirable visual contact – in Is. 52:7:

> *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet* (πόδες/רַגְלֵי) *of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace* – KJV)

The same holds true in the case of second example invoked, Jos. 10:24:

> *And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your* feet *upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their* feet *upon the necks of them.* (KJV)

Here we also have ποὺς/רֶגֶל used, and the gesture is different – suggesting victory (against the defeated kings hidden in the cave), using the *foot* or the *foot sole*, not the *heel*.

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[3] The Hebrew and Greek biblical quotations are taken from the Masoretic Text (*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*), and, respectively, from the Rahlfs' edition of *Septuagint*) – included in *Bible Works* 9 software.

1.3. The kicking animal

Another passage Judas' *heel* (in John 13:18) is often associated with, as defining violence, is Acts 26:14 (KJV):

> It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν).

As *The International Standard Bible Enciclopaedia* (1915) explains, "this was a familiar proverb in both Greek and Latin literature, and refers to the severer goading received by an ox which kicks back at the goad used to guide or urge him on". In a dictionary for the popularisation of biblical symbols[4], we also find, at the entry "Kicking, Lifting Heel", the passages from Acts 26:14 and John 13:18 put together, as if the *persecution* equated with *betrayal*. E.C. Hoskyns (1947, 441), M.-J. Lagrange (1936, 357), C. Toy (1884, 89) and A. Loisy (1903, 720) – quoted by A.T. Hanson (1991, 175), as well –, and others[5], say that Judas' image would be that of a horse kicking back with its heel.) Maarten Menken (1996, 131) only raises the problem **of** whether the expression in John implies kicking *back* or *forth*: "*To raise the heel against somebody" is a graphic description, easily understood as an expression of hostility, whether it refers to kicking forward or to kicking back.* Hence, a preacher's interpretation (e.g. Jesse Powers 2012, 188): "Judas acts like a treacherous horse, while it is fed". (However, the notion of a "treacherous horse" seems a bit far-fetched, doesn't it?) In fact, there must be a great difference between a *devil*, as Judas is called (John 6:70 – see also 13:2 and 27), and a poor animal whose only guilt is that it tries to kick instinctively (either forth or back) a goad that pricks it. And, even though the verb contains the adverb λάξ ('with the heel'), in fact neither the ox

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[4] *Parables, Riddles, and Mysteries of the Lord Revealed*: *A Bible-based Guide*, by Sandra Dawson, 2019.

[5] Including the Romanian Bible scholar, the Hebraist Isidor Onciul (1898, 162).

nor the horse hit the goad with their *heel*, but rather with their *foot* – the place where they are also (painfully) pricked.

1.4. *An ethnographic go*

Eric F.F. Bishop (1959, 332) attempted an ethnographic – sociological explanation (which is very often cited here). He assumes that behind the strange expression there would be a conception he discovered in the Jordanian port of Aqaba – where if the sole of one's foot would be lifted, and visible, it would inevitably "point in someone's direction" (and that would be "the height of discourtesy", or even "a revelation of contempt, treachery and animosity"). This finding may indeed have something to do with the *foot sole*, in that particular environment – but (in my opinion) it is highly unlikely this was the meaning of 'heel lifting', in the (universal) Gospel.

1.5. *The context effect*

A stronger argument in favour of the interpretation as *violence* may rather be – as Orchard (1998, 172) notes –, the use, in the context of the Dinner (by the Synoptics[6]), of some tough words regarding the *consuming* of Christ's body (such as "eating His body" and "drinking His blood" (Matt. 26:26-28, Mk. 14:22-24), which somehow attract, for the Psalm quotation as well, an interpretation in the same register (then, why not "crushing Him with the heel" as well?), although *its original meaning* may have been *more nuanced,* as the LXX translation suggests.

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[6] In fact, all the Synoptics seem to have in mind the same Messianic Psalm – Menken 1996, 135; Schuchard 1992, 107-8.

1.6. A handy premise

No matter how strange the gesture of 'lifting the heel' might seem, it is however read as such by virtue of Gospel's authority. On the basis of this reading, some people not only translate the Psalm's verse accordingly, but also put on it additional theological constructions, by associating the verse with other biblical scenery. For instance, the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Carpenter/Grisanti 1997, 506-7) says that in Gen. 3:15, the man crushes the head of the snake with *the same heel* by which the snake bites him (which may be effective if taken allegorically but certainly not literally), while others (like Orchard – 1998, 172) say, following an authority such as Ambrose (col. 1078), that Judas lifted *the same heel* that Jesus washed at the Dinner (in fact, Jesus didn't wash the Apostles' *heels* only.)

2. Counter-arguments. Why '*lifting the heel*' doesn't imply any *violence*

2.1. Biblical evidence

he analysis of its occurrence will show, we believe, clearly enough, that the word *heel* is but a precise element of the Bible's use of symbolic language.

2.1.1 The noun עָקֵב/πτέρνα

The Hebraic עָקֵב, *heel*, has 14 occurrences in the Masoretic Text (excepting derivatives and close words), and the Greek πτέρνα has 12 occurrences in LXX. The first and probably most relevant instance is in the so-called *Protevangelium* (Gen. 3:15), where God Himself says:

(And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head,) *and thou shalt bruise his heel* – KJV.

וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפְךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תְּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב

αὐτός σου τηρήσει κεφαλήν καὶ σὺ τηρήσεις αὐτοῦ πτέρναν

The second instance is the birth and *the name* received by the Patriarch Jacob (Gen. 25: 26):

(Afterward his brother came out) *with his hand holding Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob.* (ESV)

וְיָדוֹ אֹחֶזֶת בַּעֲקֵב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב

καὶ ἡ χεὶρ αὐτοῦ ἐπειλημμένη τῆς πτέρνης Ησαυ καὶ ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ιακωβ

Similar things are also said about some of Jacob's sons, in Gen 49:17:

Dan shall be a serpent in the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels so that his rider falls backward. (ESV)

יְהִי־דָן נָחָשׁ עֲלֵי־דֶרֶךְ שְׁפִיפֹן עֲלֵי־אֹרַח הַנֹּשֵׁךְ עִקְבֵי־סוּס וַיִּפֹּל רֹכְבוֹ אָחוֹר:

καὶ γενηθήτω Δαν ὄφις ἐφ᾽ ὁδοῦ ἐγκαθήμενος ἐπὶ τρίβου δάκνων πτέρναν ἵππου καὶ πεσεῖται ὁ ἱππεὺς εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω

and in Gen. 49:19:

גָּד גְּדוּד יְגוּדֶנּוּ וְהוּא יָגֻד עָקֵב

As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, But he shall raid *at their heels* (NAS).

Γαδ πειρατήριον πειρατεύσει αὐτόν αὐτὸς δὲ πειρατεύσει αὐτῶν <u>κατὰ πόδας</u> (It is the symbolic gesture that matters, rather than words.)

Gad, a plundering troop shall plunder him; but he shall plunder him, *pursuing him closely.* (LXE)

There is also a verbalized form of the noun, עָקֵב, approximate to: *to heel* or *to heelize*, which in fact bears the meaning '*to seize/hold by the heel*'[7].

The name Jacob (יַעֲקֹב) is a Yiqtol form (with gutural *pe*) of that Hebraic verb, which means '*he held by the heel*'. The verb has three other occurrences in the MT, and the Greek πτερνίζω renders it three times in Septuagint (with another two occurrences in the Maccabees books). As we may already have ascertained, the verb has a negative or critical nuance (*deceit*), when the victim (Esau) accuses (Genesis 27:36):

> *Esau said, "Is he not rightly named* Jacob? *For* he has cheated *me these two times. He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing."* (ESV)
> δικαίως ἐκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ιακωβ ἐπτέρνικεν γάρ με ἤδη δεύτερον
>
> הֲכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעְקְבֵנִי זֶה פַעֲמַיִם

However, the episode is evoked by the prophet Hosea (12:4) in a positive light (*a brave trick*[8]) – as the synonymous parallelism suggests:

> *In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God* (ESV)/*and by his strength he was a prince with God* (YLT)
> ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ ἐπτέρνισεν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ/καὶ ἐν κόποις αὐτοῦ ἐνίσχυσεν πρὸς θεὸν
>
> בַּבֶּטֶן עָקַב אֶת־אָחִיו וּבְאוֹנוֹ שָׂרָה אֶת־אֱלֹהִים

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[7] Similarly, the English verb *to fox* (*someone)* is formed (see Nida/Taber 1974, 57, 88) – its meaning is intelligible within the European culture. Also, the verb *to backheel* is commonly used in football. While the Merriam-Webster Unabridged Dictionary (online, 04/2023) mentions for *heel* the meaning of a *contemptible or untrustworthy person* (but without any violent connotations).

[8] Even though, according to the *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* (Carpenter/Grisanti 1997, 506-7), the meaning of the notion of *heel* can never be positive.

The prophet Jeremiah (9:4) uses this word for describing the deeds of evil men:

> (Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother:) *for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders.* (KJV)
>
> (ἕκαστος ἀπὸ τοῦ πλησίον αὐτοῦ φυλάξασθε καὶ ἐπ᾽ ἀδελφοῖς αὐτῶν μὴ πεποίθατε ὅτι) πᾶς ἀδελφὸς πτέρνῃ πτερνιεῖ καὶ πᾶς φίλος δολίως πορεύσεται
>
> כָּל־אָח עָקוֹב יַעְקֹב וְכָל־רֵעַ רָכִיל יַהֲלֹךְ

Here, the English translations of the verb עָקַב/πτερνίζω are: *to supplant* (Jer 9:4 ASV); *be tricking* (BBE); *cheat* (GWN); *be a cheater* (CEB); *find some way to cheat* (NET); *be out to trick you* (CJB); *deceive* (CSB); *be a deceiver* (ESV); *be a deceiving Jacob* (NIV); *imitate/ape Jacob, the supplanter* (NAB/NABO); *deal craftily* (NAS); *act subtly* (JPS); *act deceitfully* (QBE); *take advantage* (TNK). In French translations, we find: *cherche à tromper* (LSG); *s'y entend en mauvais tours* (TOB)[9].

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[9] In the *Book of Job* (18:9), where the noun has the meaning of a *hindrance* or *obstacle* (an impersonal fatality),

> **יֹאחֵז בְּעָקֵב פָּח** / *A trap seizes him by the heel* (ESV) / ἔλθοισαν δὲ ἐπ᾽ αὐτὸν παγίδες / *And let snares come upon him* (LXE)

the verb (in Piel stem) also has the corresponding sense (Job 37:4) – simply *to hamper, hinder* (K-B dictionary):

> (*After it His voice roars; He thunders with his majestic voice,*) *and He does not restrain the lightnings when His voice is heard.* (ESV) or: (*After it a voice roareth: He thundereth with the voice of His excellency;*) *and He will not stay them when His voice is heard.* (KJV)
>
> (אַחֲרָיו יִשְׁאַג־קוֹל יַרְעֵם בְּקוֹל גְּאוֹנוֹ) וְלֹא יְעַקְּבֵם כִּי־יִשָּׁמַע קוֹלוֹ
>
> (ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ βοήσεται φωνή βροντήσει ἐν φωνῇ ὕβρεως αὐτοῦ) καὶ οὐκ ἀνταλλάξει αὐτούς ὅτι ἀκούσει φωνὴν αὐτοῦ

2.1.2. The heel in the Psalms

In the *Book of Psalms*, the noun עָקֵב occurs thrice.

In Ps. 56/55:7, we have the meaning of a *cunning attack*/(or of *lying in wait* for it):

> They assemble, they hide, *they watch my heels,* When they have expected my soul. (56:6 YLT) *they will watch my heel* (DRA) They stir up strife, they lurk; *they watch my steps,* as they have waited for my life. (ESV)
>
> παροικήσουσιν καὶ κατακρύψουσιν αὐτοὶ τὴν πτέρναν μου φυλάξουσιν καθάπερ ὑπέμειναν τὴν ψυχήν μου
>
> הֵמָּה עֲקֵבַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר קִוּוּ נַפְשִׁי

In Ps 49:5/48:6, we have to keep in mind the verses above, in order to grasp the meaning of the metonymy:

> ἵνα τί φοβοῦμαι ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πονηρᾷ ἡ ἀνομία τῆς πτέρνης μου κυκλώσει με
>
> לָמָּה אִירָא בִּימֵי רָע עֲוֹן עֲקֵבַי יְסוּבֵּנִי
>
> *Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me* – ESV (other versions: *my foes, enemies* etc) (Ἡ ἀνομία τῶν ἐνεδρευόντων με* – Modern Greek, Vamvas) lit. *of my heel* (DRA, LXE)/*my heels* (KJV, RWB, WEB) *iniquity at my heels* (ASV, ERV, NKJ).

Other translations of this verse are: Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?* (KJV) Wherefore should I fear in the evil day? *the iniquity of my heel shall compass me.* (LXE) But also: Why should I fear in times of trouble, *when the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me* (ESV) Why do I fear in days of evil? *The iniquity of my supplanters doth compass me.* (YLT) In French: Pourquoi craindrais -je aux jours du malheur, *lorsque l'iniquité de mes adversaires m'enveloppe?* (LSG) Pourquoi craindre, aux mauvais jours, *la malice des fourbes qui me cernent* (TOB).

Finally, in Ps. 41:9/40:10 we have:

גַּם־אִישׁ שְׁלוֹמִי אֲשֶׁר־בָּטַחְתִּי בוֹ אוֹכֵל לַחְמִי הִגְדִּיל עָלַי עָקֵב

καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς εἰρήνης μου ἐφ᾽ ὃν ἤλπισα ὁ ἐσθίων
ἄρτους μου ἐμεγάλυνεν ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ πτερνισμόν

Here, most translations give: *Even my close friend in whom I
trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.* (ESV) Or: *raised.*
(NAB) But also: hath greatly *supplanted me* (DRA); *has turned
against me* (NET, NIV); *takes advantage of* me (NJB); *has been utterly
false to* me (TNK); *made great the heel against* me (YLT) – the most
literal.

2.1.2.1 The derivative noun and its meaning

We also have a Greek derivative, πτερνισμός, as an equivalent
of the Hebraic derivative עָקְבָה, *cunning*, *subtlety*, *craft* – in 2 Kings.
10:19:

> (Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his
> servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a
> great sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he
> shall not live.) But Jehu did *it* in subtilty (the same in LXE),
> to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal.
> (KJV)

וְיֵהוּא עָשָׂה בְעָקְבָה לְמַעַן הַאֲבִיד אֶת־עֹבְדֵי הַבָּעַל

Ιου ἐποίησεν ἐν πτερνισμῷ ἵνα ἀπολέσῃ τοὺς δούλους τοῦ Βααλ

The English translations for (ἐν) πτερνισμῷ/בְעָקְבָה: *with
cunning* (ESV); *craftily* (DRA, from the Vulgate *insidiose*); *guile*
(TNK); *deceptively* (TNIV); *deceitfully* (RWB); *trick* (NJB); *tricking*
(NET); *lying* (NIrV); *subtlety* (JPS); *setting a trap* (CJB); *ruse*
(NABO). The French equivalent (TOB, LSG): *ruse.*

2.1.3. The quotation in John's Gospel

However, unlike the LXX version of the Psalm verse, the NT quotation of Ps 41:9/40:10 doesn't use the derivative, but the direct word πτέρνα (John 13:18):

> (Οὐ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν λέγω· ἐγὼ οἶδα οὓς ἐξελεξάμην·) ἀλλ᾽ ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ, Ὁ τρώγων μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ τὸν ἄρτον ἐπῆρεν ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ τὴν **πτέρναν** αὐτοῦ.
>
> (I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen:) *but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his* heel *against me.* (KJV)

Menken (1996, 124) as well as Lagrange (1936, 357) and others take into consideration the possibility that there were some other Greek versions of the Psalm in circulation employing πτέρνα, instead of πτερνισμός – however, there was no awareness of such versions until post-NT times: in Aquila and Theodotion we have indeed: κατεμεγαλύνθη μου πτέρνα – a rather forced rendering in fact, by no means more intelligible[10]. Another possibility would be that this Gospel had, as speculated by Burney (1922, 125), its first different form in Aramaic, from which it was crudely translated into Greek (this may also be the origin of other mysterious expressions across the rest of the text).

It isn't worth reviewing here the dozens of divergent opinions regarding the source of the Psalm quotation and the fidelity towards it – a lot of opinions seem to have been expressed only superficially, in passing (numerous authors write, for instance, that John has faithfully followed the MT verse[11] (a coarse statement), while others assert he made a free translation or he quoted from the memory, under some the influence from

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[10] Symmachus has: συνεσθίων μοι ἄρτον ἐμὸν, κατεμεγαλύνθη μου ἀκολουθῶν (see Hexapla and LXX).

[11] E.g. Menken (1996, 137).

Septuagint[12]. Additionally, the Greek αὐτοῦ, '*his'*, which also appears in this quotation, goes beyond the quoted text either from MT or LXX.

Rather, we incline to the view that John avoided the derivative πτερνισμός because it was (Băltăceanu/Moşteanu 2004, 130) an ancient Greek neological *ism* (a sort of *heelism or heelity*), whereas for a fisherman such as Apostle, the simpler Greek form, *heel,* would have seemed more suitable – while still having in mind that in the MT (according to LXX), the concept of *heel* had that wider meaning, implying the precise notion of *cunning* or *deceit* (since the verb עָקַב had the sense of *to betray* – see the Koehler-Baumgartner dictionary). So here we are dealing with a noun with a verbal meaning (converted into a verb), in an *object of action* for *action* – type metonymy. The correct interpretation of this metonymy is explained by Menken as follows: *"*According to critical and popular etymology, the relationship between the substantive עָקֵב and the verb עָקַב consists not in that the heel is the «organ» of beguiling, but in that the verb «to seize at the heel» is so much as «to beguile»[13]*"*.

Nevertheless**,** the polysemy of the Hebrew word seems to have been reduced to the proper, anatomical meaning, losing any other connotations in the NT Greek (whence it was afterwards translated, literally, into all modern languages). Even though the sense of the contemporary calques might have been surprising for the Evangelist, and so much the more for the Psalmist, whose verse now came to be read (and revised) in the light of the Gospel quotation.[14] On the other hand, for the

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[12] An approximate summary was given by Schuchard (1992, 109).

[13] In fact, according to Gregory of Nyssa (1995, 192), "This is the work of the one who was a murderer from the beginning, to watch the heel of man" (alluding to John 8.44 si Gen 3.15) – (*P.G.* XLIV, col. 580: Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἀνθρωποκτόνου τὸ ἔργον, τὸ ἐπιτηρεῖν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὴν πτέρναν).

[14] See also § 2.1.4.

benefit of facile ethics, it might seem convenient having a more obvious crime to condemn. But, in fact, Judas simply *kissed* Jesus – even though by doing this he sealed his Master's death, and his non-violent deed was by no means less guilty[15].

2.1.3.1. *The new related verb,* ἐπαίρω

The verb that Gospel of John uses in 13:18 for 'to lift' is ἐπαίρω is only employed elsewhere when speaking about *lifting eyes* (i.e. the *perspective*). While, in the LXX, ἐπαίρω was used in relation to God's lifting *hand* against the sinners, and according to dictionaries[16], it only overlaps with the verb LXX used in the quoted verse (Ps. 40:10), μεγαλύνω, in the sense of: *to exalt* – fr. *vanter*. But it is μεγαλύνω that renders the verb in the Hebrew Psalm, *gadal* (גָּדַל) in the Hiphil stem – (הִגְדִּ(י)ל) *to enlarge*, or *to magnify* (and, when in middle voice: …*oneself*) – as Cheyne (1904, 183) notes, the verb גָּדַל in Hiphil always means: *to act proudly*. Likewise, the precise meaning of μεγαλύνω[17] here is easy to catch, from other contexts, such as (Psalm 126:3):

> The LORD hath done great things for us; *whereof* we are glad. (KJV)
> **ἐμεγάλυνεν** (*magnificavit* – Vulgate) κύριος τοῦ ποιῆσαι μεθ' ἡμῶν [ἐγενήθημεν εὐφραινόμενοι]
> הִגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הָיִינוּ שְׂמֵחִים

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[15] Quite on the contrary, since *the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones* (Sir. 28:17 – KJA).

[16] Liddel-Scott, Cambridge Greek, A. Bailly, C. Alexandre.

[17] Arndt/Gingrich Lexicon (also included in BW9): *Gr.* μεγαλύνω = *to make large* or *long* [how would it fit to the related noun, *heel*]*, to magnify* (see Lk. 1:58)*;* or (fig.) *to exalt, glorify, praise, extol.* Bruce (1989, 287) points out that Hebrew expression quoted ("even without carrying their context with them by implication") "means literally 'has made his heel great against me', and he translates: 'has taken a cruel advantage of me'".

or (Jer. 48:26):

> Make ye him drunken: for he magnified *himself against the LORD (KJV ~ ESV, LXE)*
>
> μεθύσατε αὐτόν ὅτι ἐπὶ κύριον ἐμεγαλύνθη (31:26 - LXX)
>
> הַשְׁכִּירֻהוּ כִּי עַל־יְהוָה הִגְדִּיל

And yet, in Ps. 41:9/40:10 many translate μεγαλύνω as if there we had instead the NT ἐπαίρω: *Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread,* **hath lifted up** (הִגְדִּיל) *his heel against me.* (KJV) *Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread,* **has lifted** (הִגְדִּיל) *his heel against me.* (ESV) *For even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread,* **lifted up** (ἐμεγάλυνεν) **his heel against me.** (LXE)

On the other hand, sensing that ἐπαίρω itself didn't fit well with the John 13:18 phrase either, the authors of the popular Byzantine Hymn of *Lamentations* (third stasis) changed (somewhere between centuries 9th and 14th – Acasandrei, 2019) this verb to κινέω[18]: Οὓς ἔθρεψε τὸ μάννα ἐκίνησαν τὴν πτέρναν (*they moved* or *hit with the* heel) κατὰ τοῦ Εὐεργέτου – this time, the expression is in a real (albeit late) native ancient Greek (still in use at that time in Constantinople); but was this the real intention of the original text?

2.1.4. *The meaning in Aramaic*

The Aramaic recensions too, understood the passage in the sense of *cunning/deceit*.

In the Peshitta version we read: ܗܘ ܡܚܣܕܐ ܥܠܝ – *(He) very much acted as a traitor or deceitfully against me[19]* – (with a Ethpeel

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[18] Keeping the ideea of a gross guilt.

[19] Or: *was very treacherous against me* (tr. G.D. Bauscher) betrays me (Ps 41:9 – tr. Lamsa); *employed much deceit against me* (in Schuchard 1992, 116 and Menken 1996, 131).

form – thus, with reflexive nuances – of the verb verb بحل, '*to deceive, to betray*').

In the Targum, we read: *acts mightily to outwit me* (ed. Stec, 87) or *made himself great against me with his wisdom* (tr. in Schuchard 1992, 116 and Menken 1996, 131).

Likewise, the Midrash (439) interpretation of the Psalm allows no room for understanding *heel lifting* as violence:

"*E*ven my disciples turned on me with kicks. How so? *When they entered the house of study, they entered my presence gentle as kids; but <u>when they left my presence</u>, they became like goats goring with their horns.* By bread David meant words of Torah, as in the verse Wisdom… saith… Come eat of my bread (Prov. 9:5)".

Even though Psalm 41 itself was not preserved in the Dead Sea Scrolls, we can find a very similar passage (a free quotation of the verse, in the *Hodayoth Hymns* (1QH, Col. XIII/Col. V + Frg. 29, Scrolls, 32-3), with the same words: עלי הגדילו עקב אוכלי לחמי גם – where we should translate, in fact: '*Assumed great airs against me with their intrigue*', since in the context there is no mention of violence, but only of treachery, as the sequel (speaking of a conspiracy) shows: "Even those who share my bread have lifted up their heel against me, *and all those who have committed themselves to my counsel speak perversely against me with unjust lips*" (ed. Parry-Tov, 32-33, verses 23-24). Moreover, verses 26-27 refers to sins of the tongue, as well: "But they devise the ruination in their heart, and with the words of Belial they have exhibited a lying tongue; as the poison of serpents it burst forth continuously".

2.2. Patristic evidence. How the Church Fathers understood the phrase

2.2.1. Eschewing the Latin Fathers as less relevant in the matter

For this study, I did not consider very clarifying the Latin versions or comments, due to their authors' indirect access to

the Greek Bible, as in Latin there is a misleading similarity between *calcaneum*, 'heel', and *calco*, 'to tread'. In the Vulgate, the Jerome's translation from Greek has at Ps. 40:10/41:9 *"magnificavit super me* subplantationem" ('hindrance' or 'cunning'), and the one from Hebrew: "*levavit contra me* plantam" ('the foot sole'), while at John 13:18 it has: "*levavit contra me* calcaneum *suum*" ('the heel'). The direct interpretation in the sense of *violence* can be found in Augustine's comments (in Latin) both in Psalm 41/40 ("*conculcare me voluit*" – col 461), and in John 13:18 (col. 1795: "*Hoc quid est aliud nisi conculcabit me?*" = 'And what is this, but that he shall trample upon me?' – tr. Gibb-Innes, 452).

2.2.2. *The traditional Eastern interpretation: as* cunning

But for the John Chrysostom, probably the most influential Eastern (Greek-speaking) NT exegete, it seemed obvious that, in the quoted passage, *cunning* rather than *violence* was the question: "He added*,* 'He that eats bread with Me'; showing to that wretched one that He was not seized in ignorance, but even with full knowledge; a thing which of itself was most of all fitted to restrain him. And He said not, 'betrays' *Me*, but, 'has lifted up his heel against Me'*,* desiring to represent the deceit, the treachery, the secrecy of the plot" (τὸ δολερὸν καὶ ὕπουλον καὶ λαθραῖον τῆς ἐπιβουλῆς παραστῆσαι βουλόμενος – *Hom.* LXXXVIII, col. 387). When it comes to interpreting the quoted Psalm, things are all the more clear: even though we don't have a direct homily by John Chrysostom in Psalm 40/41, he makes a point of referring to the Gospel quotation from Ps. 40:9, in his commentary on Ps. 48/49:5, explaining "the obscure, *enigmatic word*, the new and strange *parable*" in the light of the incident between Esau and Jacob in Gen. 25:26, where he notes that 'seizing by the heel' is equivalent to 'deceit', and stating therefore that: "the Holy Scripture has the habit of calling the

deceit 'heel'". And when reading the Hebrew word (עָקֵב), he exclaims (col. 226-7): "See how there is a problem, an enigma, and an obscure sense and much difficulty?" The expression was understood the same way by Athanasius of Alexandria (the Great): "['The heel', that is to say] the mockery, the plot, the deceit" (ἐμπαιγμὸν, ἐπιβουλὴν, δόλον – col. 200).[20] According to Theodoret of Kyrus, too, the Psalmist speaks, in Ps. 48/49:6 and 40:10/41:9 (col. 1165, 1221), of an act of cunning: he gives as an example the runners kicking up each other's heels – as a repetition of the incident between Esau and Jacob in Gen. 25:26. "The word 'heel' in my view refers to deceit, on the analogy of the runners. Esau also taught us this, in his disappointment. (...) He gave the deceit the name of *heel*" (Gr. δόλον (*cunning, treachery, craft*) γὰρ τὴν πτέρναν ὠνόμασεν). The same imagery is used by Cyril of Alexandria (col. 997): "He gave the deception and the evil-doing the name 'heel' (Gr. πτέρναν γὰρ τὸν δόλον καὶ τὴν κακουργίαν ὠνόμασε), using the metaphor of those who compete in running and kick up the heel of their fellow runners, in order to make them fall." Teophylact of Ohrid, too, comments, on John 13:18 (*P.G.* CXXIV, col. 156): "*He has lifted against me his heel* i.e. has he contrived cunning and deceit against me – from the paradigm of those who compete and trip up their fellow-competitors, by stepping on their heel, so that they make them fall."

2.2.3. *Concluding remarks regarding the biblical image of the* heel

According to (Kruger, 1994, 221) "the obscure last part" (of the verse Ps. 41:9), is explained by the other gesture mentioned earlier in the verse: 'who ate my bread' "(symbolizing an alliance

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[20] Col. 200. The Church Fathers tend here to repeat even the same standard wording – and they give the same subsequent moral interpretation (that may be not relevant for our purpose): our real enemies are our own sins, that surround or deceive us.

or some other kind of relationship): then 'has lifted his heel' clearly refers to a directly opposite attitude, the breaking of that bond which we may express in other words as 'has turned his back on me'."

Perhaps we could more easily understand this symbolic language if we could put ourselves in the position of the archaic people living full time in nature, barefoot or scantily shod, in a hot climate – with the permanent stress of unnoticed attacks from snakes – which graphically express (in the plastic Oriental language) the cunning and cowardly action of a traitor. That type of language was not used out of awkwardness, but because its images were far more precise than plain words. But that code of symbolic gestures that enriches the biblical language cannot be separated from their social context. The symbolic images cannot be freely approximated since their "associative meaning" accurately derives from practical situations (DeWaard/Nida 1986, 152). The most concrete things (*chairs* etc) or even anatomic parts (the *head*, *hands* – Nida/Taber 1974, 59, 62 – or *nose*) can bear elevated meanings. With respect to the *heel* as a symbol, it is easily understandable as the *target* of *cunning attacks*, but how could it be that appropriate for expressing the *instrument* of an attack from a man (since it lacks the speed, precision and force for it)?

2.3. An evidence from Western contemporary exegesis. The analogy of Ahithophel

As concerns the context of Psalm 41/40, Maarten Menken[21] has proved clearly enough the passage openly alludes to the story of Ahithophel and his betrayal of David (in 2Sam.), which prefigured Judas in detail (according to the ancient Jewish

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[21] 1996, 133-135. The article quoted here was initially published in 1990, and he was also followed and completed by B. Schuchard (1992, 114-115) and A.T. Hanson (1991, 173-174).

tradition of linking Psalms with David's biography) – this solid analogy should also provide a credible interpretation key of the Psalm.

Indeed, Judas, just like Ahithophel in 2Sam. 17, takes part in the plot as a former confidant and member of Jesus' intimate circle (Ps. 40:9, 2Sam. 15:12, 16:23, Mk. 14:10); he gives "peace" to Him (like in 2Sam. 18:28, but then goes out, and "speaks evil" of the One whom he used to serve (Ps. 40:6, John 13:30), just like Ahithophel 2 Sam.18:32, "plotting evil against Him"; he promises a false peace by means of eliminating the righteous One (2Sam. 17:3), the solution also proposed by Caiaphas (John 11:50 and 18:14). On the other hand, the betrayed David crosses the brook Kidron (2Sam. 15:23) like Jesus (John 18:1), Who prays there that the cup (would) be removed from Him (Mk. 14:32-42), as David had prayed against Ahithophel (2Sam. 15:30-31). Moreover, Ahithophel's diabolic plan (rushing the king unexpectedly and isolating him) in 2Sam. 17:1-2, although then not carried out, is the one ultimately put into practice by Judas (Mk. 14:43-52). Eventually, however, both traitors, the "sons of perdition"[22], committt suicide by hanging – Matt. 27:5 and 2Sam 17: 23 (in fact, the only such cases in OT, and NT respectively), in passages that are even lexically similar.

The NT exposition takes this parallelism into consideration and even makes it manifest, precisely for emphasizing Jesus' Messianity, as the son of David (Menken 1996, 136, Schuchard 1992, 115). The only difference is this is exactly what deprives Menken's thesis the violent meaning of the *heel*. Since Ahithophel did not personally use any violence, we could continue the analogy by inferring that the Gospel had no intention of attributing it to Judas either. As a matter of fact, in all other biblical cases of betrayed prophets, we see there was no question of Brutus-like direct attacks, but of mere perfidy – that has not, on the other hand, outmaneuvered God.

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[22] As the Hodayot hymn (verse 25) calls them – see Scrolls, 32-33.

2.4. The ethical/pedagogical argument. A possible moral resulting from the passage

Jesus in the Gospel of John, was more than anywhere else in NT "a historical figure", "the fifth evangelist" – or the first one, "whom we should begin with", as with the "Creator Who validates the creation by entering it fully". Moreover we know, as Hays says, that "Jesus' rejection of violence and His call to love the enemy would be given prominence in any ethic that looked to the historical Jesus for direction", that He "spurned violence as the appropriate instrument of God's righteousness"[23].

The non-violent message of Jesus, as the historical person John portrays, wasn't confined to His personal verbal teaching and actions (suffering violence without responding in kind). Before their preaching as Apostles, The Twelve were also a part of Jesus' personal preaching, as official disciples and recruits, whose behaviour itself bore their Teacher's message. They too ate with the sinners, kept silence in front of the unclean woman speaking with their Teacher; they were taught not to call down fire from heaven to destroy the hostile people (Luk. 9:54-55)[24], not to bother the woman acting strangely (Matt. 26 10), not to take the sword (Matt 26. 52), and so on. After receiving them in His intimate circle, then supervizing and teaching them for more than three years, constantly controlling their outbursts,

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[23] 1996, 167, 164. A central theme in his book, since the word *violence* (or *violent*) occurs 290 times in its 470 pages.

[24] At every turn, he renounces violence as a strategy for promoting God's kingdom (e.g., Luke 9:51–56, where he rebukes James and John for wanting to call down fire from heaven to consume unreceptive Samaritans), and he teaches his followers to assume the posture of servanthood (Mark 10:42–45; John 13:1– 17) and to expect to suffer at the hands of the world's authorities (Mark 13:9–13; John 15:18–16:4a) – Hays, 1996, 329-330.

none of them could have such nasty habits anymore – we believe that even an ordinary man could have made sure of that. "He assembled a group of disciples around himself and taught them. He singled out twelve of them", and "His life and teaching stand in some relation of continuity with the movement that he initiated" (Hays 1996, 161, 163).

Menken (1996, 131) tries to avoid a humiliating posture for Jesus saying that: "The idea of Judas beguiling Jesus cannot be reconciled with John's view of Jesus as one who 'knows everything'" – the same idea in Loisy (1903, 720). Toy, too (1884, 89) had said: "It is possible that the first clause of the psalm-verse is omitted in order to avoid the statement that Jesus trusted Judas", as if Jesus would be seen as shamefully weak if He was betrayed. In fact, He would rather look weak if He had around Him people with such an aggresive temper. (Judas could have been tolerated as a mean snake, not as a mean horse…) In case of receiving a violent blow (or kick) from his close disciple, Jesus, as His Teacher, would have been the first responsible.

The Old Testament also taught: *Make no friendship with a man given to anger, nor go with a wrathful man* (Prov. 22:24 ESV) – and *travel not by the way with him*; *go not with him into a solitary place* (Sir 8:15-16, KJA, LXA). Then, Paul also resumed (and adapted) the advice (II Tim. 2:24): *a servant of the Lord must not strive/be quarrelsome, but gentle* (YLT). Even the ancient Christian tradition (as early as the so-called Apostolic Canon n° 27 – 4th century) stated that a servant of the community is to be a peaceful man in the first place, as a basic requirement for his position – in order to give testimony of the God of peace[25].

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[25] <u>Κανὼν ΚΖ΄</u> (Ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων): Ἐπίσκοπων, ἢ πρεσβύτερον ἢ διάκονον, τύπτοντα πιστοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, ἢ ἀπίστους ἀδικήσαντας, καὶ διὰ τοιούτων φοβεῖν ἐθέλοντα, καθαιρεῖσθαι προστάττομεν· οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ ὁ Κύριος τοῦτο ἡμᾶς ἐδίδαξε· τοὐναντίον δέ, αὐτὸς τυπτόμενος οὐκ ἀντέτυπτε, λοιδορούμενος οὐκ ἀντελοιδόρει, πάσχων οὐκ ἠπείλει. (Canons, 179)

3. Conclusion

Since the translation problem comes from the Greek original, we may expect to find old mistranslations and misinterpretations in every language, in the same measure.

However, the most circulated Modern Greek translation (2003) already has, in John 13:18: (στράφηκε εναντίον μου) „has turned against me – while in the Psalm 40:9, there is no *heel* anymore, but *turning the back* (μου γύρισε την πλάτη και με κλώσησε).

Likewise, since in English there are more translations than in other languages, we already have a few recent versions that rendered the real non-violent meaning of John 13:18: NIrV, NET and BWE have: "*has turned against me*", and EE has: "*has become my enemy*. Even though these translations may sound "too weak" (Lindars 1972, 454), their force derives from the context itself (*the traitor ate my bread* – "something that placates even the enemies" (ὃ καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς καταδυσωπεῖ, Theophilact, col. 156), thus "it was a gross breach of the traditions of hospitality" (Bernard 1929, 467) which the Evangelist describes in a sharp moral contrast with Mary's offering of her most costly treasure, with John's and the others' true and loving discipleship, and, most notably, with Jesus's footwashing – Shin 2018, 123 and 136 (see also Kim, 2004, 173). The text, and the logic of the things doesn't allow any other violence-related interpretation (other than that the former Apostle made himself great against the Lord with the cunning of his betrayal), and we shouldn't look for a colossal feeling of guilt, since the real sin lies in a deep internal No, that "pierces the heart of the Crucified"[26], if we are supposed to stay faithful to the biblical testimony[27].

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[26] Schürmann/Ratzinger/von Balthasar 1986, 87-88.

[27] The only reason why the Evangelist would have purposely mixed the two images ('deceiving' and 'shamefully crushing under the foot' as put by the *Dictionary of Imagery*, 376), would have been that he no longer believed Judas

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Linguistic Boundaries for the Denominational Faiths.
On the Translations of the Greek *καθολική* in the Old Romanian and Slavonic Creeds

Résumé: *Le mot* sobornicească *n'a pas été le seul employé dans l'article neuvième du Symbole de Nicée-Constantinople en roumain. Au contraire, le mot premièrement usité a été* catolicească. *Ce mot a été replacé ultérieurement, comme une réaction face au prosélytisme des uniates en Transylvanie. Le même chose s'est passé dans la langue slave: le mot usité par le Grec Cyrille était* каѳолическоую, *en accord avec Rome, qui a elle-même translittéré l'original, créant une tradition presque universelle dans les langues européennes modernes. Les russes ont fait l'imaginatif changement dans une époque ou les relations avec les Grecs s'étaient dégradées, et l'uniatisme diminuait leur tolérance. Les slavophiles ont compris le* Sobornost *comme une définition de l'orthodoxie. Mais ce terme ne peut pas être que synonymique avec le concept du Symbole original. Autrement, comme les occidentales remarquent, L'Orient serait coupable d'hérésie.*

Mots-clés: *Calques, contactes slavo-roumaines, Symbole de Nicée-Constantinople, Sobornost, catholicité*

1. Preliminaries

The translation of religious texts into the vernacular began, in South Eastern Europe, a few centuries earlier than in Western countries, through the action of the Byzantine missionary brothers, Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius, among the Slavonic-speaking population. After them, a multisecular tradition carried on and accomplished their traductological movement's aims. Among the translation problems this movement faced in creating the Slavonic Christian terminology was the rendering of the adjective *καθολική* in the Nicene Creed.

2. The translation into Old Church Slavonic

2.1. *Каөолическоую, the original rendering*

As all preserved Glagolitic documents show us clearly enough, initially, in brothers Cyril and Methodius' time, the Slavonic version of the Creed employed exclusively the loanword *каөолическоую*.[1] Nor did the changing into *съборноую* come from their direct successor, St Clement of Achrida, as only the School of Preslav accomplished the transition to the Cyrillic alphabet,[2] the only one in which the latter variant can be found in old manuscripts – as a matter of fact, it didn't appear either in the subsequent documents in the Greek alphabet, elaborated in the Slavic area – such as the Confession of the Metropolitan Mogila of Kiev (1645). *Съборноую* is only to be found later, in a secondary redaction of the Creed, dating to the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century.[3] And, for a long time, there was no contradiction between it and the former variant, that is why, in order to designate more specifically the Eastern Orthodox Church, both words, *каөолики* and *съборна*, could even be used together (Gezen 1884 and Deubner 1929). Later on, the Slavic translation of *καθολική* became to be regarded as a distinguishing mark of the Orthodox Slavic Churches, although Cyril and Methodius seemed to make nothing at all of the differences of rite between the Latin and

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[1] Or its other forms such as *каөоликинсоую* (or *каөоликинска*), *каөоликию, каөоликⷩ, каөоличьскую*. For more details, see Gezen (1884, p. 50, 54, 94-95 ff).

[2] Cyrillic script was a more Bulgarian than Macedonian phenomenon. See Obolensky (1971, ix, p. 7), Pavlov et al. (2008, p. 58) or Tachiaos (2001, p. 116).

[3] See Gezen (1884, p. 44-45). And, since it derives from the noun *съборъ*, it may transpose a concept from the Apostolic Symbols of faith of Western inspiration (there, the Catholic Church was also called *congregatio* or *unio sanctorum*), as Deubner (1929) alleges.

Greek liturgy in their time (Lacko 1963). Their biographies make no mention of the rite the two brothers promoted in their mission in Moravia – they employed in services Greek terms and prayer formulas, and on the other hand they celebrated Roman liturgies and accepted consecrations after the Roman ritual (Duthilleul 1963) – at that time, at least theoretically, this was perfectly possible and natural, as the Church was one. Moreover, 'from a missionary's viewpoint, the Greek liturgy would not be of any more value than the Latin, since the Moravian Slavs understood neither language' (Lacko 1963). The two missionaries had to counteract the Latin intransigence by the conciliatory gesture of employing, besides daily prayers translated after the Greek *Euchologion,*[4] an adaptation of the Latin text of St Peter's Liturgy (Tarnanidis 1988, 108): in this way they could respond to the Bavarian propaganda in Moravia and subsequently present themselves in Rome, where Methodius received, in 867, an explicit authorisation from the Roman Pontiff to use the Slavonic language in the services in Great Moravia[5] (and Cyril lived to see, in 869, his liturgy used in four churches of the metropolis). The character of the Glagolitic manuscripts from Sinai (of the eleventh-twelfth centuries, and with fragments which go back to the period of the mission of the two brothers) shows a clear Western provenance in their liturgical translations (Tarnanidis 1988), and even the texts translated from Greek have, as token of Western contacts, ornamentations done in the Italian style (Ševčenko 1991). The lack of specificity of their biographies regarding the rite (Lacko 1963) is seemingly due to the fact that they have translated in Moravia, besides the Byzantine liturgy – with prayers of Western composition in the preparatory part, *proscomide* (Tarnanidis

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[4] The *Euchologion* was rather a free compilation, but the text and the terminology were Greek. See Tarnanidis (1988, p. 66-67).

[5] See Lacko (1963, p. 103) and *Vita* (1976, p. 77, 79).

1988), the Roman Mass,[6] including a Creed. As a matter of fact, a form of Latin liturgy already pre-existed in the region – and the compromise made on this issue by the missionaries must have been the cause of the mixed form of the subsequent Central European Slavonic liturgy.[7]

All these facts could prove by themselves the traductological choice that the old Glagolitic documents reveal (i.e. a quick adaptation of καθολική/catholica, instead of finding an equivalent), was the one the apostles of the Slavs could have made. Considering all the justifications they had to provide, according to their biographies, for the use of a new language in the worship, it would have been obviously impossible for them to defend the replacement of a sensitive word in the Creed[8] as well, so much the less a replacement of its sense.[9] In fact, nothing antioccidental in general or antipapal in particular could be found in Cyril and Methodius (Obolensky 1971) and it would denote a misunderstanding to ascribe to them any disrespect to the Pope, whom their biographies honour with the title of *Apostolic*,[10] as he was still enjoying the primacy of honour in the

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[6] 'Today it is an accepted fact that the Roman-Slavonic liturgy was initiated simultaneously with the Byzantine-Slavonic, and that the author of both was St. Cyril' (Lacko 1963). See also Obolensky (1971, ix, p. 3-4).

[7] See Obolensky (1971, ix, p. 4, 6). The liturgy was used until the second half of the eleventh century, when it was eliminated by the Romans.

[8] As a matter of fact, they also used a previous translation of the Creed already existent in Moravia, made from Latin and written in the Roman alphabet (Obolensky 1971).

[9] As later on suggested by the Slavophiles. Even in Moldavia and Wallachia more than eight centuries later, Dosoftei and Anthimus, who had to provide many justifications for translating for the first time the Slavonic service into the Romanian vernacular, could not even think of touching the word (*sobornuju*) in the Creed.

[10] According to *Vita* (1976), the Brothers were consecrated in Rome, where Constantin even took his monastic vows, before being buried in a Roman basilica. The Pope escaped Methodius from prison and supported him. At his burial, the service was celebrated in *Latin*, *Greek* and Slavic. In Moravia,

united Christendom. Indeed, the Slavic peoples adopted during that epoch the Slavonic liturgy as a pledge of a certain independence, but it was with respect to the Greeks in the first place.[11] Whereas for the Greek apostles of the Slavs the replacement of the consecrated term could not have been justified on any political grounds. The avoiding of каѳолическоую would have meant, rather than rejecting Roman resonances, a repudiation of the language of the Byzantine Empire with which they remained in contact, which they thought to be eternal,[12] and where the original meaning of the Creed was expressed.

2.2. The need of the new word

The diplomatic situation remained by and large unchanged until the Great Schism in 1054, and even a long period after.[13]

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according to the instructions from the Pope, the Gospel and the Epistles were read first in *Latin*, then in Slavic. And even the *Vita* of Methodius employs, in its manuscript dating from the late twelfth century or early thirteenth century, the word каѳоликиєю (p. 78).

[11] See Obolensky (1971, ix, p. 6). Thus, the Bulgarians decide to adopt the Slavonic Liturgy, after the death of the two brothers and after the expulsion of the Methodius' disciples from Moravia and the Central Europe, their initial missionary area.

[12] See *Vita* (1976, p. 19, 31, 39) and Obolensky (1971, p. ix, 7).

[13] 'The little we know about relations between the Russia and the Latins from 1054 to 1240 (or at any rate to 1204) shows a curious mixture of tolerance and moderation as well as scarce examples of hostile attitudes on either side. Prior to 1054 there is no evidence of any antagonism or disagreement between the nascent Russian Church and Rome' (Fennell 1995). After the Fourth Crusade (1204), the metropolitans of Kiev were 'consecrated and indoctrinated' in the anti-Latin centre of Niceea (and 'briefed in the current official Orthodox attitude to Rome'), until 1261. 'The time had not yet come, however, for the hostile reaction of church – *and* State – in Russia to the Latin West to be openly manifested in propaganda and polemics. This was only to appear in the centuries following the Tatar-Mongol invasion when Russia found itself faced on its western boundaries

Then, after traumatic experiences with the proselytising Roman Catholicism beginning in the thirteenth century, [14] a serious problem emerged at the end of the fourteen century,[15] which dramatically changed the perspective. The simultaneous downfall of the Byzantine state and frictions between the Russian Church and Constantinople over canonical independence [16] only made things worse. The elimination of *каѳолическоую*, which previously would have seemed a pointless provocation, now became a necessity. The replacement of the loanword by a translation, was, certainly, decided subject to the preservation of the meaning, with no intention of altering the orthodoxy of the Creed at all. And – as Deubner (1929) points out –, any understanding of the word in a different way from its traditional meaning would have equalled a denial of Nicene Creed.

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with the aggressive might of Catholic Lithuania and Poland, to say nothing of the Teutonic Knights on its north-western Baltic frontier'.

[14] 'Les tendances agressivement prosélytes des communautés latines installées sur le sol russe provoquèrent des réflexes de rejet' (Roberti et al. 1989).

[15] Rome and Kiev entered then in an open ecclesiastical conflict. 'In 1372 Pope Gregory XI ordered the archbishop of Cracow to appoint a Latin bishop to what was Antony's metropolitanate (Galich, Peremyshl`, Vladimir and Kholm) and to remove the "schismatic" [i.e. Orthodox] bishops' (Fennell, 1995).

[16] 'La rupture avec Constantinople, le mépris des Grecs provoquèrent un désaffection pour la tradition byzantine et son remplacement par une tradition locale' (Roberti et al. 1989). Since the end of the fourteenth century the Russian Church became more and more nationalist and unable to resist the aggression of the state: 'L'église russe devint bientôt un enjeu politique entre les princes'. On the other hand, 'knowledge of the Greek language gradually declined and become exceptional after about 1200' (Vlasto 1970).

3. The subsequent history of the word in Moldova and Wallachia

3.1 First known translations of the Creed into Romanian

For the Romanian language, by virtue of its Latin origin, grammatical structure, and basic Christian vocabulary,[17] nothing would had been easier to adopt, in the Nicene Symbol of Faith, than the Greek/Latin word *καθολική/catholica* in its Romanian form, *catolică*, just as so many other languages have done. Yet, although they are not Slavs, the Romanians in the two Principalities were urged by similar circumstances to establish the same Slavonic rendering, as we will see below.

The first scholar who advocated for the introduction of the vernacular in the Church of Romanians[18] – which for centuries had used Old Church Slavonic[19] – was the pioneer typographer and deacon Coresi, who published several translated versions of the Symbol of Faith using two different renderings for *καθολική*, as seen in his *Molitvelnic* [=Prayer Book] (1564), and in the volume *Carte cu învăţătură* [=Book with teachings] (1581). While

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[17] Due to its origins dating back to the first generation of the Church – a commonplace in Romania. See, for instance, Păcurariu (1991, p. 71-79). The words in the *Creed* and in the *Lord's Prayer* are almost all Latin, as well as the names for *Christmas, Easter, Sunday, Resurrection, Church, God, Virgin, Cross*, the name *Christian* itself (*creştin*, coming from the popular Latin *chrestianus*) and so on.

[18] Before considering Romania in general, this article is treating separately the three Principalities in which it was formerly divided: Moldavia (north-east), Transylvania (north-west), and Wallachia – the southern province, also having Transylvania under its ecclesiastical authority.

[19] The Romanians had been compelled by circumstances and by the start obtained by Slavonic literature (Urechia 1885) to abandon, for a period, their own linguistic way. The Slavonic influence in the Romanian Orthodox area was now at its peak, as it had been officially used by the Church and State for many centuries.

he tried to maintain the wording of Article IX close to the Old Church Slavonic version (which employed the adjective *съборноую*), his translations sounded clumsy,[20] as the Romanian language did not yet have a corresponding word, but only the loan *săbor*, equivalent to *σύνοδος, σύναξις* – *synod*, *assembly* (Miklosich 1862-1865): one variant was '*a săborului apostolilor'*, which could mean at best 'of the assembly of Apostles', while the other, '*de săboru',* was rather equivalent to 'of the synod'. His different versions showed once more that these translations were neither official nor established.[21] His Creeds, as well as his other publications, were the fruit of his personal initiative, somehow at the limit of ecclesiastical acceptance, as in the more pluralistic province – which was influenced by the practice of other denominations – of Transylvania, where he did not have to obey an Orthodox state, like in his native Wallachia[22], but where his works seemed to remain little known.[23]

3.2. First borrowing, as 'săbornică'

After a lost century for Romanian Orthodox printing, the next culturally affluent period took place at the end of the

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[20] 'Şi într-una sfîntă a săborului apostolilor besearecă' (1581) and 'Şi de săboru apostolească beseareca' (1564). See Coresi (1914, p. 562).

[21] So N. Iorga is wrong when he says the Creed in Coresi's *Molitvelnic* belongs to an earlier period, when the basic Christian texts were translated (see Iorga 1904, p. 26). In fact, at that time, the Creed was uttered only in Slavonic.

[22] Moreover, an important part of the population (the Saxons and many of the Hungarians), who had just adhered to the Reformation, put an increasing pressure on the Orthodox Romanians to abandon their Slavonic worship in favour of the vernacular, hoping this way they would be converted more easily to Protestantism – see Maior (1976, p. 323); decades later, a Calvinist ruler – George Rákóczi – even enforced it by law).

[23] Istvan Fogarasi, author of a Calvinist Catechism in the province a century later (1648), was not aware of his publications.

seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century, under growing Greek influence. In the Principality of Moldavia, the service was celebrated, according to its prince chronicler Cantemir,[24] antiphonally, part in Slavonic, part in Greek,[25] while some readings of the Liturgy, like the Gospels and the Epistles, were already being said in Romanian. The metropolitan Dosoftei (1671-1973; 1675-1686) translated the Liturgy as well as the other services into Romanian, and his Creed had a form largely similar to the one recited today. Article IX even contained a rhyme ('în una svîntă *săbornică* şi *apostolică* Besearică'[26]), which made it more fit for public recitation. As for the term *săbornic*, it seemed to already have some tradition in the churches, as Metropolitan Varlaam felt free to invoke it vigorously in his Answer (1645) against the Calvinist Catechism issued in Transylvania (1642). He employs the Slavonic loanword strictly in the Greek sense, designating a universal Church: '*Săbornică* [=Catholic] it is called, because it is gathered from all tongues'. Whereas the Calvinist one 'is not *săbornică*, because it

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[24] He also indirectly gives us a reason why theological concepts had to be imported in a Slavonic form. After the Council of Florence, all Moldavian documents in Roman script were burned and, at the instigation of a metropolitan of Bulgarian origin, the Cyrillic alphabet was adopted instead (Cantemir 1956) – a measure subsequently taken by all Romanians, in order to avoid 'the popish soiling', as a footnote in a reprinted edition of *Descrierea Moldovei* (by Neamţ Monastery), in 1825 explained. The Roman See had managed to attract not only the Moldavian representatives in Florence, but also, in 1588, the Metropolitan Gheorghe Movilă – see Suttner (1991, p. 56-57).

[25] See Cantemir (1956, p. 290). The practice was accepted in Wallachia, too. In 1698, Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem, as a resident in Wallachia, urged, on behalf of the Wallachian religious authorities, Bishop Athanasius of Transylvania not to give in but avoid the unauthorized use of the vernacular in the services (See Cipariu, 1855, p. 243). The fact is also mentioned (with a negative commentary) by the Uniate priest (Bălan, 1914) – while the Orthodox chronicle '*Condica sfîntă*' records it together with a positive commentary Ghenadie (1886).

[26] In *Molitvelnicul de-nţăles* (1681)[=Understandable Prayer Book].

is not in the whole world, nor from all the tongues assembled'.[27]
The term can also be found in the 1696 *Ceasloveţ* [=Book of
Hours] of Sibiu, in Transylvania, which contains a liturgical
form of the Creed more evolved than the translation of the
sixteenth century of Coresi, although not as good as the con-
temporary one of Dosoftei[28] –Article IX had the same form as
quoted by Varlaam.[29]

3.3. The hesitant beginnings of 'săbornicească'

In that period, the most important typographical, cultural
and ecclesiastical centre of the Romanians was Wallachia. [30]
Here, the respect for the established Slavonic tradition was
higher, and the Romanian services began to be celebrated later[31]
– but the decision was to have a national-scale impact. Initially,
the custom was to translate only the ritual, the service texts
themselves being kept in Slavonic. The first person who
translated the Creed was Metropolitan Stephen (1648-1653;
1655-1668), in his manuscript *Slujebnic.* Article IX has the form:
'Întru una Sfîntă, *săbornicească* şi apostolească Besearecă' –

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[27] 'Săbornică se cheamă, că din toate limbile iaste adunată' (…) 'nu-i
săbornică, că nu-i în toată lumea, nici din toate limbile adunată' (Varlaam
1984).

[28] It still mixes up theological terms, such as '*fire*' [=nature] and '*fiinţă*'
[=substance].

[29] 'Şi într-una sfîntă săbornică şi apostolească Beseareca'. Another
Transylvanian liturgical book, the 1689 *Molitvelnic* of Bălgrad, only indicates
where the Creed is to be inserted in the service, but without reproducing
it – perhaps the Slavonic version could still have been used.

[30] Under the aegis of the enlightened prince – and, eventually, martyr –
Constantin Brîncoveanu.

[31] The service entirely in Romanian began to be celebrated in 1710 –
according to Metropolitan Nifon (1851), The Italian secretary of Prince
Brîncoveanu confirms this: in 1718, he notes that this custom began re-
cently – 'questo religioso abuso introdotto a' nostri giorni' (Del Chiaro,
1914).

employing, for the first time the term appended with the combined adjectival suffix, '*nicească*' (equivalent to '*nică*', and without any semantic change), as currently recited in Romanian Orthodox churches. But for Stephen '*săbornicească*' was not supposed to exclude its synonym '*catolicească*'. His manuscript was not for the Church's use as such,[32] while his printed *Mystirio* [=Book of Sacraments] (1651), which still included the Creed in Slavonic[33], when it comes to describing the rituals,[34] used, for designating the Church in the vernacular, '*catolicească*'.[35] So did another bishop, Gregory, on his installation in the diocese of Buzău (1668): he recited the Symbol of Faith in Slavonic, then the ecclesiastic chronicle records that he swore allegiance (Ghenadie 1886) to 'Apostoleasca și *catoliceasca* sfinta biseareă a lui Hristos' [=the Apostolic and catholic holy church of Christ]: although in the vernacular vocabulary the word *săbor* (for *synod*)

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[32] 'He did not have the courage to utter it in the Church' (Ghenadie 1886).

[33] Only the ritual norms were translated into Romanian – they stipulate, however, that if the baptized one couldn't understand the Creed, he must have it explained: 'You should also know this, priest: if the one to be baptized doesn't know our language, then you are to translate it to him.' ('În știre să-ți fie și de aceasta o Popo, că de nu va ști limba noastră cel ce va să se boteaze, atunci să i-o tălmăcești.') Here, 'our language' means the Slavonic language, in which the service was officiated, and in which the Creed had to be memorized: 'And in case of a small child the godfather can say it instead of him. And he is to pay attention to teach it to his godchildren, so as they may know it by heart, or else you will be held responsible for it before God.' ('Iară la copil mică poate să zică și nașul în locul lui. Și să poarte grijă nașul să înveațe pre fini să o știe de rost, iară denu tu vei da seama la Dumnezeu.')

[34] In the section 'Pentru botezul eriticilor' [=On the Baptism of the Heretics].

[35] 'Ereticii carii vin la Sfînta Pravoslavnică și Catoliciasca besearică, și jeluesc să se împreune Pravoslavnicilor…' [=The heretics who come to the Holy Orthodox (or the Pravoslavie) and *Catholic* church, and beg to unite with the Orthodox (or the Pravoslavni)…]; 'și cu deadinsul să-i înveți sfinta leage pravoslavno (sic!) Catolicească' [=and insistently teach them the holy pravoslavno Catholic law].

was very present[36], the derivative 'săbornicească' seemed less fit than 'catolicească'.

The next metropolitan of Wallachia, Theodosius (1668-1672; 1679-1708),[37] tried to avoid both loans by picking a word from Romanian linguistic soil:[38] he chose '*adeverită*', which is derived from '*adevăr*' [=truth], and means *confirmed, ascertained as true,* thus promoting a free translation.[39] This version was the one commonly used during his pastorship, even by the suffragan bishops ordained for Transylvania, but it was not adopted by all scholars and it did not survive his death.[40] In

[36] 'Lîngă aceastea crede și se supune celor șapte sfinte și a toatea lumea săboare' [=Besides these, he believes and obeys the seven holy and of the whole world synods (*săboare*)], says the Chronicle (Ghenadie 1886) – 'săboare', obviously, belonged to the current language, while the derived 'săbornic/săbornicesc', which designated the Church, was not part of the Wallachian vocabulary, even at the highest ecclesiastical level.

[37] A character involved in the beginning of the vast process of translating into Romanian all the biblical and liturgical texts – for which 'he had gathered around him at Tîrgoviște all the men of science and of merit' ('adunase la Tîrgoviște pe toți bărbații științei și ai meritului'. However, he preferred, for the time being, that only the ritual rules be published in vernacular, 'not daring' ('necutezînd') to use the 'Romanian short language' ('limba scurtă românească') for any more: see Bianu & Hodoș (1903, p. 234). His caution was seemingly justified, at least concerning himself: as he uttered the Creed in Romanian (for the first time in Wallachia, on his investiture as hierarch) without sufficient theological accuracy – for instance, he still uses 'connatural' ('de o fire') instead of 'consubstantial' ('deoființă').

[38] Things like this were possible, in an epoch when the religious terms were being created. His Article IX of the Creed is: 'Întru sfîntă *adeverită* și apostolească besearică' (Ghenadie 1886).

[39] An interpretation more than a translation, seemingly echoing the argument of St. Irinaeus: 'It is within the power of all, therefore, in every Church, who may wish to see the truth, to contemplate clearly the tradition of the apostles manifested throughout the whole world' (*PG* vii, 848A. tr. Roberts & Rambaut, 1885).

[40] Ghenadie, the author of *Condica Sfîntă* [=The Holy Chronicle] (1886) cannot hide his surprise at the choice of Metropolitan Theodosius. 'We

1702, Damaskinos 'The Doctor', one of the major liturgical translators of the time,[41] reverted to Stephen's version when he uttered the Creed, on his installation as bishop of Buzău.[42]

3.4 The establishment of the word and its context

The person who imposed the actual form of the Creed was the scholar (and eventually martyr) Anthimus the Iberian, who recited it on his installation as bishop of Rîmnic, in 1705, for the first time integrally and officially, and which is almost identical to the version of today. He, too, reverted to Stephen's wording for Article IX: '*Și întru una sfîntă, săbornicească și apostolească besearică.*' This version of the Creed, slightly improved and with small variations in his editions of *Molitvelnic* [=Prayer book for Priests][43] (1706 and 1713), remained established by *Ceasoslovul* [=The Book of Hours] of 1715,[44] as after his death (1716), the newly installed Phanariote regimes in Moldavia and Wallachia[45]

cannot explain how could he translate the term *καθολική* or *съборнаꙗ* by *adeverită*. We understand he might avoid the term *catolicească*, but not the term *săbornicească* (as he uses many other slavicisms).

[41] Despite his preference for a more traditionalist style. As a former teacher of Slavonic, in his revision of the *Psalter* of Anthimus the Iberian, he replaced some overbold Greekisms with old and rooted Slavicisms. Yet, his translations of almost all service books determined the eventual complete abandon of the Church Slavonic language by the Romanians.

[42] See Ghenadie (1886, p. 90, 93). But only the first Article of his Creed was written down – either because only so much was uttered in Romanian, or for other reasons, as even some Greeks Creeds confessed by Greek hierarchs were not completely written.

[43] Provided with long canonical and theological justifications, assuring that prayers in the vernacular are not forbidden, either by the Scripture or by and tradition (as Dosoftei had to do, in his turn, in Moldavia).

[44] The same definitive formula can already be found in 1708, used by Joasaph of Buzău on his installation as hierarch – see Ghenadie (1886, p. 105-106). However, these last little variations did not touch Article IX.

[45] Although it emphasized the cultural affinities and denominational ties between the Romanians and the Greek rulers, this regime was founded on

were less propitious for an authentic Romanian cultural life. Things had to freeze for a long time with respect to the evolution of the liturgical language – fortunately, this happened right after the services were translated, and most of them had already been introduced into the circuit of worship practice, under the patronage of a great ecclesiastical figure, St Anthimus.[46]

Meanwhile, the Orthodox in the third Romanian principality, Transylvania, faced a different kind of problem. At the end of the seventeenth century, the Austrian Catholic Empire seized the opportunity of annexing Transylvania[47] and concocted a quick religious 'Union', after an already established pattern, thereby cynically exploiting the unbearable social status of the Transylvanian Church (Roberti 1922, 7, 45-46). At first, a union with the local Orthodox leadership was settled, even with faked documents,[48] then, by blackmail and humiliating gestures,[49] subsequently by arrests, tortures, killings, by using the army for baptizing children and, eventually, by the demolition of the Orthodox monasteries with cannons,[50] great chunks of the

the murder of the illustrious Constantin Brîncoveanu (the prince), and Anthimus the Iberian (the metropolitan) – both today called martyrs, by the Romanian Orthodox. There was little surprise that a lack of major cultural figures in Wallachia and Moldavia followed – See Iorga (1926, p. 489). What was already elaborated in the linguistico-theological field had to be preserved for at least a century. Then, over time, its authority increased.

[46] Since 1710 the Liturgy (including the Psalms 102 and 145) was used 'from time to time' in Romanian (see p. 183, note 4), and from the 1730s the translated version became authoritative within the jurisdiction of the Wallachian Metropolitanate. See Barbu Bucur (1969, p. 1071).

[47] This was settled in 1699 by the Treaty of Karlowitz.

[48] For more details, see Păcurariu (1994a, p. 29-33) or Păcurariu (1994b, ii, p. 289-306).

[49] The Orthodox bishop was reordained, then permanently overseen by an envoy (Păcurariu, 1994b, p. 34-6).

[50] Initially, the union was made without bringing it to the attention of the general population. After a few decades, when a theologically coherent opposition came into being, the priests guilty of being ordained in

Romanian Church were torn out of the jurisdiction of the metropolitanate of Wallachia. The Church which did all these things, and to which the local bishop had to swear allegiance,[51] was called 'the *catoliceasca* Church of Rome The feeling inside the Orthodox Wallachian Church was easy to guess, and the times left little room for diplomacy: Hilarion – the one who preceded Anthimus as the bishop of Rîmnic – was dismissed for making some very minor, practical concessions to the local Catholics,[52] while Anthimus' Iberian (Georgian) origin, which tied him more to the Russian world, must have been, on his appointment, a pledge of his lack of any affinity for Catholicism.[53] On the other hand, for Anthimus, a foreigner, supported distantly only by the ruler,[54] it would have been impossible to undertake anything against the general current, even if he had wanted to. That is why he couldn't sponsor any other rendering of the term *καθολική* in the Creed. Even though the direct transliteration from Greek or Latin might have been more intelligible to the

Wallachia were imprisoned for life, beaten and tortured, their wives persecuted and their followers ruined. When, finally, after sixty years, a hieromonk organized a rebellion, a general was sent to solve the problem: he destroyed with cannons all monasteries of stone or brick, burned down all their wooden structures, and moved part of the population (See Păcurariu, 1994a, p. 374-93).

[51] A person of little intellectual and moral value – but even these weaknesses were cunningly exploited by the Uniates' harsh proselytism.

[52] About allowing the Catholics to build a church and to bury their dead in the common cemetery. On the dismissal of Hilarion, see Şerbănescu (1964, p. 188), and Ghenadie (1886, p. 97). That gives an indication about how tense the atmosphere was and what the expectations of the new bishop were.

[53] And indeed, he proved himself to be such a supporter of the Panslavist cause as to get into trouble with the prince. See Păcurariu (1994a, p. 156).

[54] Who had imposed him with some difficulty. 'He was elected to the bishopric with the signatures of some strangers, not even the metropolitan Teodosie signed. It seems that a silent battle was waged, the will of the ruler being too strong, for the high prelates to say anything' (Teodorescu 1960); see also Iorga (1932, p. 17) and Ghenadie (1886, p. 97).

Romanians, it was the Slavonic loanword that provided the necessary refuge against easy confusion. So much the more as the use of *catolicească* had begun to be monopolized by the Catholic Catechisms spread by the Transylvanian Uniates: 'Dottrina Christiana',[55] for instance, used the expression 'Sfînta biserică *katolicească*' [=Holy catholic Church]. And, although the word *katolicească* was explained by the simple fact that the Church (i.e. 'those who serve Christ'[56]) 'is an assembly'[57], the ecclesiological rigour was maximal with respect to the affiliation to the Roman Church: 'Whereas those who baptize themselves according to their own will and are not partakers of the union of the saints', 'are not in the Church's bosom', but 'denied the Christian church', so that 'they are cursed' and 'are slaves of the devil'.[58]

The Romanian Orthodox Churches, like all the other Eastern Churches, forced by the strength of such Catholic proselytism to abandon their old name of *catholic* (calling themselves *orthodox* or *pravoslavie*[59]), had to adapt the wording of the Creed as well, by adopting the Slavonic synonym '*săbornică*', which seemed to secure, as a minimal linguistic barrier, a refuge against easy confusion. However, this subterfuge was but a momentary and partial solution. Once the Uniate propaganda took cognizance that the locals had adopted another term for 'catholic', it had no restraint in calling the Church of Rome '*săbornicească*',

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[55] Issued in Rome in 1677, translated into Romanian by Vito Pilutio. The same approach was taken by the Catholic Catechism issued by Peter Canisius in 1703 at Cluj, on behalf of the new Transylvanian Catholic Archbishop: see Bianu & Hodoş (1903, 138).

[56] '*Cei ce slujesc lui Hristos*'.

[57] '*Ieste adunetură*'.

[58] 'Pe cînd cei care se botează după voia lor şi nu sînt părtaşi la uniunea sfinţilor' 'nu sînt în sînul bisericii', 's-au lepădat de biserica creştinească', 'sînt blestemaţi', 'sînt robi dracului'.

[59] 'Pour se démarquer d'une catholicité romaine trop souvent perçue comme porteuse d'une universalisme agressif, Les Églises orientales furent obligées, à leur corps défendant, de se rabattre sur le terme *orthodoxe*, tout en ayant parfaitement conscience de leur catholicité' (Roberti 1922).

too. The Catholic Catechism of 1726[60] employed the words 'catolicesc' and 'săbornicesc' alternatively,[61] and defined them together.[62] And, indeed, the denotative meanings of *sobornicească* and *catolicească* were the same: *catholica.*[63] Nevertheless, they had divergent connotations, as they pointed to different centres of the same reality. The Catholic Catechism assured at the top of the Church could be no other than 'the Pope of Rome',[64] while, on the other hand, in the Orthodox Catechism 'Pravoslavnica mărturisire' [=Orthodox Confession][65] (1691, Buzău), offered Jerusalem as an alternative for the centre of catholicity[66] – avoiding in this way the Roman universality.[67].In fact, on behalf of

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[60] 'Catehismuş sau Învăţătură creştinească în folosul neamului rusesc din Ţara Ungurească', Sîmbăta Mare – with the sanction of Ioan Iosif, the bishop of Sebast and Munkacs.

[61] Even the Catholic Church was named the 'pravoslavnic' [=Orthodox, equivalent to the Russian Pravoslavie].

[62] 'It is called *catolicească*, that is *săbornicească*, because it is everywhere, and is spread in the whole world ', the Catholic catechism said.

[63] According to their Slavonic correspondents. See also съборьнаıа and католичьскаıа in Miklosich (1862-1865) or in Lysaght (1983).

[64] Who is 'the Deputy of our Lord Jesus Christ, because he remained in St Peter's stead' – 'Vicariş Domnului nostru Iisus Hristos, pentru c-au rămas în locul Sfântului Pătru.'

[65] *Pravoslavnica mărturisire a săborniceştii şi apostoleştii Beseareci Răsăritului* (Buzău, 1691 – Romanian Academy Library, CRV 92), is a translation (using the form '*săbornică* ') of the *Confession* issued in 1643 by the Romanian metropolitan of Kiev, Peter Mogila (Petru Movilă).

[66] 'Secondly, this article teaches that the *săbornic* Church is not from any particular place, be it even the most distinguished one, because the churches belonging to places are all alone, such as the ones in Ephesus, in Philadelphia, in Laodicea, in Antioch, in Jerusalem, in Rome, in Alexandria and the rest. And among all these different churches, that one is called the mother of them, which was first enriched by the coming of Christ and received the eternal salvation and the remission of sins, from which the preaching took its origin, beginning at Jerusalem' (Question no. 84).

[67] Whereas the Greek Church, formerly imperial (so concretely universal), was still regarded in the small Romanian Principalities as 'the great Church our mother' ('muma noastră biserica cea mare') – Prince's *Foreword* of the

Romanians it also provided some sort of advantage and a reservation about any other national universality, as, at that time, the Patriarchs of Jerusalem were frequent presences at the Romanian Principalities' courts and Romanian Princes were their protectors.[68]

The Greek Church received with some coldness this perspective: its ecclesiology doesn't make any mention or use of Slavonic rendering.[69] But the Roman Church was the one who contested it sharply. In the case of Romanians, this dodging was always criticized as unnatural by their Catholic fellow-countrymen, for straying both from the authentic word and from the Roman roots of the Romanian nation.[70] As for the Russians, the investigation of A. Deubner points out abruptly, from the Catholic standpoint that the change of the word *catholic* in the Creed is blameworthy since it 'was made for unscientific reasons'. But can science be invoked against facts, blaming legitimate defensive reactions? The Uniate scholar jumped, even in 1929, to the conclusion that the Church called *catholic* can only be the one ruled by Peter's successor.[71]

1688 Bucharest *Bible*. See Bianu & Hodoş (1903, p. 286).

[68] Patriarch Dositheos even acted, in Wallachia, as 'a sort of *hypermitropolitan*' of Prince Brîncoveanu. See Iorga (1932, p. 410) and Iorga (1901, p. 43).

[69] Sticking to the Fathers, but also to a connotation of Byzantine universality. Metropolitan Timiadis (1992), for instance, finds a lot of other solutions for the issue of non-ecumenicity – the Church is like a tree in winter, the catholicity means integrality of the doctrine – but not even one derived from the Slavonic equivalent.

[70] The Uniate clergyman Ioan Bălan (1914), for instance, denounces the translation by *sobornicească* as inexplicably inaccurate. These two were always favourite topics of Catholic propaganda.

[71] While Dejaivfe (1952) resorts to a Russian philosopher sympathetic to the Roman Church (Solov'ev) in order to prove it.

4. The 19ᵗʰ century Sobornost' and today's semantic adventures of the term

By virtue of their nineteenth century nationalistic ideology, the Pravoslavni Russians (from whom the Romanians imported the word) also replied to these linguistico-theological attacks by a hermeneutical counterattack, Thus, Aleksey Khomyakov [72] came up with a perspective in which the translation by *сьборноую* is even more correct than the original term: Unlike the old 'catholic' (which does have a meaning but in Greek, the Latin sense of 'universal'[73] being 'too commonplace for a Creed of the Church'), the Slavonic term is also able to express the quality of being *catholic* in an etymological sense – τὸ καθ' ὅλον – (Khomyakov 1872). His interpretation became a 'wellnigh ubiquous motif' of the so-called Slavophile philosophical current, of which he was one of the first representatives, and the *Sobornost'*, a Russian commonplace (Nichols 1989). For Sergius Bulgakov (1935), *Sobornost'* is 'the soul of Orthodoxy' because, although it preserves the same sense as the initial *catholicity,* that 'assembles and unites', it brings something in addition: the *conciliarity,* in contrast with the monarchic authoritarianism, attributed to the Roman Catholicism.

With respect to the conciliarity, the theory was adopted in modern Romania as well, where the derivation of the word in the Creed from the noun 'sobor' was exploited, so the Orthodox Church can also be called 'the church of the *sobors*.'[74] This

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[72] In whose opinion the Slavs – as 'Iranians' – have also a racial superiority, in particular over the Latins – 'Kushites' (Walicki, 1975, 209-210).

[73] And, as Deubner (1929) points out, since Augustine and especially since Gregory the Great, the sense in which the Romans employ the word *catholic* is *universal.*

[74] 'Biserica soboarelor', as Viorel Mehedinţu (1966) calls it in his thesis, elaborated under the supervision of Fr Dumitru Stăniloae. However, the Assembly which proclaimed this note of the Church was only the second Ecumenical Council.

theological development may have in common with this adoption of the present *соборную/sobornicească* in the Creed a certain adversity towards the Western ecclesiologies, especially the Uniate Catholic one,[75] yet it must be confronted with the hist already established orical facts: a distinction should be made between the content of this doctrine – no matter how true –, and the limited goal of the translation. Khomyakov's theory does not expound – as he takes for granted[76] – on the reasons St Cyril had for conceiving the new word in a *scientific* (as Deubner puts it) manner, in a time of ecclesiastical peace: the evidence we have proves there was no such thing. Khomyakov was only relying on the presence in the Slavonic Creed of the late translation, which, even in his time, was explained by the Russian Catechisms in the same old way.[77] Furthermore, the recent interpretation of the term as *conciliarity* couldn't work as a distinguishing mark of Eastern Church, since we can have equally elaborate Catholic argumentations, according to which the conciliar notion is to be found, if not exclusively, at least equally authentically, in the Roman Church.[78]

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[75] Mehedinţu – like Khomyakov (1872) – indirectly and directly accuses the Roman Church of promoting a 'poorer' catholicity.

[76] 'Although we don't have documents, it is doubtless that they chose the word, and this also clarifies its sense, because they were Greeks and in communion with Rome so they could have chosen another one' (Khomyakov 1872). The same conjecture, made by Mehedinţu (1966, p. 390).

[77] Joseph Wilbois (1908) quotes such an official Catechism from the beginning of the twentieth century, making no difference between *sobornaja* and the word it translated from Greek: 'Why is the Church called *Sabornaja* or *Catholic* or *Universal*? Because it is not limited by any place, time, or people, but includes in itself the true believers of all times, all places, and all peoples'.

[78] The conciliarity, stated explicitly by the decree *Haec Sancta* (1415) pertains, due to the work of *sensus fidelium*, to the *depositum fidei* – 'Ideea conciliara e integrata in *depositum fidei*', as Alberigo (1981), puts it. See also Dejaivfe (1952, p. 468-469, 473) or Lane (1991, p. 212).

5. Epilogue

For some, confusion and unneccesary questions would arise even now, so the Slavonic rendering may be still useful in the Creed. In fact, it would be unwise and against the Orthodox ecclesiastical principle of 'economy' to modify, for abstract reasons, such a delicate formulation that has taken root. However, it won't work as a boundary in the same way as in fourteenth- to eighteenth-century, after the change in Orthodox-Catholic relations made Vatican II and Balamand Agreement (1993). Nor can a word warrant a denominational identity today, when the amount of information has become so high. In the modern Russian language there is now a clear difference of spelling ('т' vs. 'ф') between the Catholic (Roman) Church and the *catholic* concept of the Creed. In Romania, as the theological language has massively evolved since the seventeenth century, when it consisted almost exclusively of Slavicisms,[79] *sobornicitate* (which gained conciliar connotations, due to its Slavonic etymology) can be employed alternatively with *catolicitate* (which could have the advantage of better rendering the theology resorting to Greek etymology.

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[79] Treaties such as *Pravoslavnica mărturisire* apparently have, due to their age, too great an authority to be subject to any further revisions. Yet all the theological explanations in it sound linguistically obsolescent today (the features or qualities of God are not longer called '*osebiri*', but '*însușiri*' or '*atribute*'; the person is no longer '*obraz*', but '*ipostas*' or '*persoană*'; even Creed is no more the *sign of faith* – '*semnul credinței*' –, but the *symbol of faith* – '*simbolul credinței*'). And most Slavonic terms made room for the more precise Greek and Latin loans or to Romanian new words.

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The Anthimus'[1] *Psalter* (1710), the National *Psalter* of Romanians

Résumé: *Dans les dernières éditions roumaines synodales de la Bible, les Psaumes ont la même forme qui se trouve dans toutes les éditions bibliques antérieures, jusqu'à celle de 1795. Une étude qu'on cite souvent affirme que le "Psautier national" roumain a paru en 1703, en Buzău. Une correction s'impose, concernant la datation et la localisation de la prototype. On doit mettre hors de cause ce Psautier roumain de 1703, édition fictive, composé de deux autres. En fait, le vrai prototype a été l'édition prochaine, publiée à Târgoviște, en 1710, par le métropolite Anthime d'Ivir. Elle se détache des versions antérieures, son texte est fidèle l'original grecque de la Septante, en rompant avec l'intermediaire slave, et la qualité de son langage s'impose. Cette version a profité aussi de l'introduction du service religieux en roumain, la même année. A l'égard de l'auteur, nous avons des temoignages que Anthime d'Ivir lui-même etait aussi traducteur – ses touches finissaient aussi tous les texts religieux majeurs de son pays adoptif.*

Mots-clés: *Anthim d'Ivir (Ivireanu), Damascène Voinesco (le Savant), Psautier roumain, langage biblique et liturgique, vielle langue litérraire roumaine*

I. The innovative edition

The poetic diction of the *Book of Psalms*, even in the last BOR[2] *Bible* (2014, reprint of the 2008 edition), has an intriguing archaic flavour. Hence, the first question that arises in an inquiry concerning the evolution of the liturgical Psalter in Romanian language is this: "Since when the current version has existed?" By following back the thread of filiations, it can be found in the *1914 Synodal Bible*, as well as in all other biblical editions,

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[1] Anthimus the Iberian (in Romanian: *Antim Ivireanul*).
[2] Initialism for the Romanian Orthodox Church (*Biserica Ortodoxă Română*).

going all the way back to the Blaj *Bible* (1795). Researchers frequently refer to an investigation[3] that ascertains its prototype version issued in 1703 at Buzău. This is important, since the text in question would be the oldest one still in public use, of all Romanian religious literature. No matter how well performed for their time, all previous editions had, in fact, an audience limited in time – now they are unintelligible and unserviceable –, while this one remained intact, excepting some minor retouching, for as much as three centuries, up to the present day. Therefore, it was called the *national Psalter*[4], and the observation the respective investigation made[5] deserves its numerous quotations. Nevertheless, as we will argue below, it must be amended with regards to the dating and localisation, and that will cast a different light on the prototype version (which will also require a reassessment of the book).

The edition referred to as the prototype, by the 1974 investigation is the Romanian *Psalter* of Buzău[6], whose unique copy, belonging to the Romanian Academy Library, has the shelf mark CRV 139 A. In the same year 1703, a *Psalter* with the ritual instructions in Romanian, but with the Psalms in Slavonic[7] was issued at Buzău, by the bishop Damaskinos – and its shelf mark is CRV 138A. Some researchers even went so far as to ascribe special meaning to the fact that this Slavonic edition was openly assumed by a hierarch, while the Romanian one appeared unsigned[8]. Alexandra Roman analyzes the text itself and raises incidentally the question of the possible paternity of Bishop

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[3] Roman, *Filiations*.

[4] See, for instance, Chindriş, *Vulgata*, p. LXXIII, or Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 112.

[5] Namely, that "the 25 editions printed in the three Romanian Principalities during the period 1710-1791 reproduce, all, an *identical* Romanian translation of David's Psalms" – Roman, *Filiations*, p. 233.

[6] BRV, vol. I, p. 540.

[7] BRV, vol. IV, p. 29.

[8] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos,* p. 635.

Metrophan[9] – without taking into account other variants, such as the one of Bishop Damaskinos, preferred by Barbu Teodorescu (who, based on this premise, draws other additional inferences[10]).

A bibliographical rectification: the "Romanian *Psalter* of 1703" was Slavonic

Those who consult the book today find, however, that it no longer has the shelf mark CRV 139A – but CRV 139A+480. Indeed, on taking a closer look, it can be noticed that the title page has a slightly different hue from the rest of the book and, as the marks of the restoration work show, it also used to have other dimensions – a few millimetres less. On the other hand, the name of the proofreader, published on the last page, Grigorie Râmniceanu [=Gregory *of Râmnic* – proper name], many times simply referred to as such, should have been sufficient for changing the dating; but even a prelate like Gabriel Cocora didn't make the connection to the ecclesiastic history, although he noted the fact that, out of the 15 books that were issued in Buzău between 1691 and 1703, only one didn't mention that it was printed "prin osârdia şi prin nevoinţa iubitorului de osteneli Mitrofan, episcopul Buzăului" [=by the diligence and endeavour of the toil-lover Metrophanes, Bishop of Buzău] – it mentioned instead, uncommonly: "cu osteneala smeritului între ierodiaconi Grigorie Râmniceanul" [=with the efforts of the humble among hierodeans, Gregory of Râmnic][11]. The surname 'Râmniceanul' alludes in fact to the second half of the

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[9] Roman, *Filiations,* p. 242.

[10] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 637. If Damaskinos reprinted his *Psalter* at Râmnic, it would mean that even an *Apostol* [=Apostolos, Book of the Apostles] of 1725, whose place of publication is not known, must have been a reprinting of his as well.

[11] Cocora, *Buzău typ.*, 3-4, p. 288.

century and to the area of Râmnic, where numerous typographists had that honorific title – which could distinguish them from other monks and typographists of the same name[12]. There was even a confusion between two clergymen with identical names and titles, both living in the same period, in the same place[13]. On this matter, the controversy lingers,[14] but most researchers consider that our character, the hierodean Gregory of Râmnic, was born in 1763 in Vâlcea, worked under the bishops Caesarius and Philaret at Râmnic – from 1780 on as proofreader, then also as a chief steward of the bishopric –, and eventually he became, during 1823-1828, the bishop of Argeş[15].

It was the bibliologist Livia Bacâru who, somewhere during 1974-1976[16], attached with a clip to the inner cover of the unique copy CRV 139 A, a note in which she pointed out that from the Romanian Buzău *Psalter* of 1703 (CRV 139A) only the first page has been preserved, while the rest underneath is simply the later text of the Râmnic *Psalter* of... 1784 (CRV 480). During the digitizing process undertaken in the 2000s, the note

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[12] See Sacerdoţeanu, *Râmnic typ*, p. 322-349. In fact, there is found another hieromonk Grigorie, proofreader of the *Service of St. Nicodemus*, in 1767 (see BRV, vol. II, p. 175-176).

[13] We also see in Sacerdoţeanu, *Râmnic typ*, p. 344-345, how the two proofreaders, both "Râmniceanul", one of them hierodeacon, the other hieromonk, intersect – however, the hierodeacon begins his activity with the 1781 *Cazanii* [=Sermons].

[14] Alexandru, *Gregory*, p. 624.

[15] Cf. Păcurariu, *Hist. Rom. Church*, vol. III, p. 59-60, Şerbănescu, *Bishops,* p. 606-607 and Sacerdoţeanu, *Râmnic typ.*, p. 297.

[16] The specialist was wont to compare the old books, being an "author of handicraft notes and copy-specific features"– see *Bacâru*, p. 8-9, 18. Between 1974 and 1976, she was researcher at Central State Library, Department of Special Collections (Romanian Old Books and Romanian Rare Books). Although she retired in 1976, and passed away in 1999, her handwritten comment in pencil, had, in 2009, sufficient authority to be included in the catalogue file of the volume, by her colleague Rodica Popescu. The remark was made, however, after the publication of the Alexandra Roman's paper.

was included in the library catalogue file of the volume – whence the composite shelf mark.

Indeed, the contents are similar to the Râmnic edition of 1784 (proofread for sure by Gregory of Râmnic), but the rectification Bacâru made must be carried through to the end: consequently, the 139A edition, was a fictitious one, since its only copy (on whose basis it was included in BRV catalogue), was composed out of the title page in Romanian of the **Slavonic** Buzău *Psalter* of 1703 (*138 A*), which is identical, and (within the same cover binding, where people from the church of Temereşti-Timiş, whence the volume has been taken, inserted it – probably, for the current liturgical use, as it was more intelligible to them), the text of a later Romanian *Psalter*, in the Romanian language (as matter of fact, it is possible that the printing equipments in Buzău and Râmnic would have had some compatibility, since the formats of the *Psalters* were relatively similar). Consequently, the recorrected shelf mark of the book should be: CRV *138A*+480.

The prototype and its first reprinting

With these introductory clarifications in place, we are now ready to look at the real prototype of the 'national' Romanian *Psalter*, which, consequently, must be the next edition, chronologically: the *Psalter* printed in Târgovişte, by Anthimus the Iberian, in 1710. When browsing through it, the reader discovers an edition which, indeed, moves away from the preceding version (from the 1688 Bucharest *Bible*, that Anthimus had reprinted in 1694, without any changes[17]. The 1710 version was a new one, "acum întru-acest chip tipărită" [=now in this manner printed],

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[17] Including even its misprints. Roman, *Filiations,* p. 238.

as the title-page mentions [18], which Damaskinos Voinescu (surnamed 'the Doctor'[19]) republished in Râmnic later in 1725, with the explanatory note: "acum într-acest chip a doao oară tipărită" [=now in this manner for the second time printed][20], a statement that (had) remained obscure, without the clarifications made above – it was asserted, with little evidence, that 'second time' means either after an unknown edition supposedly issued in Râmnic in 1724[21], or, otherwise, after the Buzău edition of 1703[22] – the one we have shown never existed. The similarity between the two versions, Anthimus 1710 and Damaskinos 1725 is very close, excepting some slight retouches and an occasional word change within each psalm. In that period, Râmnic and all Oltenia province was occupied by Austrians, and printing activity was looked askance at by the Catholic government. The explanatory note on the title page was intended to show that the text was a harmless one, not propagandistic and not offending for the Catholic, since it was already printed and in liturgical everyday use[23].

In order to illustrate what sort of improvements the Anthimus 1710 edition (and its reprinting in 1725) brought about, in comparision with the 1688 (1694) edition, we will give some examples – it was mainly about eliminating archaisms and

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[18] BRV, vol. IV, p. 37.

[19] *Damaschin Dascălul.* Another rendering: Damaskinos the Scholar (Gr. *Didaskalos*).

[20] BRV, vol. IV, p. 225.

[21] Teodorescu, *Circulation*, p. 184.

[22] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 634.

[23] As he will say about the *Minee* [=*Menaia*, Monthly Service Books]: "*Sunt libri Ecclesiastici antiquissimi, asueti in ritu nostro Orientali*" – Letter to Tige, on 22th of November 1725 – Dobrescu, *Hist. Austr.,* p. 164. The idea of those who claim, however, that the first edition referred to by the 1725 edition would have been issued in 1724, can be gainsaid even on the ground that 15 years was the average time to elapse between two different editions notified as such by the printers of those times in Râmnic (see Sacerdoţeanu, *Râm. typ.*, p. 306).

replacing the simple perfect tense, as Anthimus proceeded in other Romanian biblical passages as well[24]. The little improvements Damaskinos brought to the 1725 edition – consisting mainly of well-chosen synonyms, sometimes even following suggestions from previous editions – do not result in constituting a new corpus of the *Psalms*. So the Anthimus version has remained, for the most part, unchanged until today – as can be seen in the third column, containing the current text of the Synodal *Psalter*.

Ps. 5:3-5 (LXX 4-6)

1688 (1694)	*1710 and 1725, identical text*	*2014*
Dimeneaţa asculta-vei glasul mieu; Dimeneaţa dvori-voiu Ţie şi mă vei vedea. Că nu Dumnezău vrând fărădeleagea eşti tu; Nu va	Dimineaţa vei auzi glasul mieu. Dimineaţa voiu sta înaintea Ta şi mă vei vedea; că Dumnezeu ce nu voieşti fărădeleagea, tu	Dimineaţa vei auzi glasul meu; dimineaţa voi sta înaintea Ta şi mă vei vedea. Că Tu eşti Dumnezeu, Care nu voieşti fărădelegea, nici

[24] Mainly by replacing the simple perfect tense with the compound perfect tense, "as in the most widespread Romanian idiom" – cf. Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 115-116. Perhaps those would have been the differences felt in Transylvania, between the language of Bucharest 1688 *Bible* and the language of church services, attributed to Damaskinos: "*Cea mai mare parte a cărţilor bisericeşti s-au tălmăcit de Damaschin, episcopul Râmnicului, cu stil şi graiu foarte luminat*" [=The most part of the church books were rendered by Damaskinos, the bishop of Râmnic, with a very clear vernacular and style], Radu Tempea, *Cuvântare înainte* la *Gramatica Românească* [=Foreword to the Romanian Grammar], Sibiu, 1797 (BRV, vol. II, p. 396). While, with regards to the 1688 *Bible*, Samuil Micu said: "*Acea tălmăcire mai pre multe locuri neplăcută urechilor auzitorilor iaste, şi foarte cu nevoie de înţeles, ba pre altele locuri tocma fără de înţeles iaste*" [=That rendering in many places is unpleasant to the ears of the hearers and very uneasy to understand], BRV, vol. II, p. 380.

nemernici lângă Tine cel ce vicleneaşte, nici vor rămânea cei fără de leage în preajma ochilor Tăi. Urâş pre toţi ceia ce fac fărădeleagea.

eşti. Nu va lăcui lângă tine cel ce vicleneaşte, nici vor petreace călcătorii de leage în preajma ochilor tăi. Urât-ai pre toţi cei ce lucrează fărădeleagea.

nu va locui lângă Tine cel cel vicleneşte. Nu vor sta călcătorii de lege în preajma ochilor Tăi. Urât-ai pe toţi cei ce lucrează fărădelege.

Ps. 51:1, 4-8 (LXX 3, 7-11)

1688 (1694) *1710/1725* *2014*

Ce te făluieşti întru răutate, cel tare?
(…)
Pentru aceaea Dumnezău te va surpa desăvârşit, să te zmulgă şi să te râdice de la lăcaşul tău şi înrădăcinarea ta de la pământul celor vii. Vedea-vor direpţii şi să vor spăimânta, şi spre el vor râde, şi vor zice: "Iată om care n-au pus pre Dumnezău ajutoriul lui, Ce nedejdui pre mulţimea avuţiei lui şi să întări spre

Ce te făleaşti întru răutate/răotate, puternice?
(…)
Pentru aceasta Dumnezeu te va sfârăima până în sfârşit: smulge-te-va, şi te va muta de la lăcaşul tău, şi rădăcina ta din pământul celor vii. Vedea-vor drepţii, şi să vor teame, şi de dânsul vor râde şi vor zice. Iată omul, carele n-au pus pre Dumnezeu ajutoriul luiş: Ce/ci au nădăjduit spre mulţimea bogăţiei

Ce te făleşti întru răutate, puternice?
(…)
Pentru aceasta Dumnezeu te va doborâ până în sfârşit, te va smulge şi te va muta din locaşul tău şi rădăcina ta din pământul celor vii. Vedea-vor drepţii şi se vor teme şi de el vor râde şi vor zice: "Iată omul care nu şi-a pus pe Dumnezeu ajutorul lui, ci a nădăjduit în mulţimea bogăţiei sale şi s-a întărit

deşărtăciunea lui". Şi eu, ca un maslin prea rodit în casa lui Dumnezău; nădejduiiu pre mila lui Dumnezău, în veac şi în veacul veacului. Mărturisi-mă-voiu Ţie în veac, căci ai făcut; şi voiu îngădui numele Tău, căci iaste bun înaintea celor curaţi ai Tăi.

sale, şi s-au întărit întru dăşărtăciunea/ deşărtăciunea sa. Iară eu ca un maslin roditoriu în casa lui Dumnezeu: nădăjdu-it-am spre mila lui Dumnezeu, în veac şi în veacul veacului. Mărturisi-mă-voiu Ţie în veac, că ai făcut; şi voi aştepta numele Tău, că e bun înaintea cuvioşilor tăi.

întru deşertăciunea sa". Dar eu, ca un măslin roditor în casa lui Dumnezeu, am nădăjduit în mila lui Dumnezeu, în veac şi în veacul veacului. Slăvi-Te-voi în veac că ai făcut aceasta şi voi aştepta numele Tău, că bun este înaintea cuvioşilor Tăi.

Ps. 145:5-9

1688 (1694)

1710 and 1725, identical text

2014

Fericit căruia Dumnezeul lui Iacov e ajutoriu lui, nădejdea lui pre Domnul Dumnezeul lui, pre Acela ce au făcut ceriul şi pământul, marea şi toate ce-s întru dânsele, Pre Acela ce păzeşte adevărul în veac, făcând judecată celor ce să năpăstuiesc, dând

Fericit căruia Dumnezeul lui Iacov e ajutorul lui, nădeajdea lui spre Domnul Dumnezeul lui. Spre cel ce au făcut ceriul, şi pământul, marea, şi toate cele ce-s într-ânsele. Spre cel ce păzeaşte adevărul în veac; spre cel ce face judecată celor

Fericit cel ce are ajutor pe Dumnezeul lui Iacov, nădejdea lui, în Domnul Dumnezeul lui, Cel ce a făcut cerul şi pământul, marea şi toate cele din ele; Cel ce păzeşte adevărul în veac; Cel ce face judecată celor năpăstuiţi; Cel ce

hrană celor flămânzi. Domnul dezleagă pre cei ce-s în obeade, Domnul înţelepţeaşte orbii. Domnul îndireptează pre cei dărâmaţ. Domnul iubeaşte pre cei direpţi. Domnul păzeaşte pre cei prişleţi, pre sărac şi pre văduo va ajutori, şi calea păcătoşilor va stinge.

năpăstuiţi, spre cel ce dă hrană celor flămânzi. Domnul dezleagă pre cei ferecaţi în obezi, Domnul înţelepţeaşte orbii. Domnul ridică pe cei surpaţi; Domnul iubeşte pe cei drepţi. Domnul pă-zeşte pe cei nemer-nici; pre săracul şi pe văduva va primi, şi calea păcătoşilor va piarde.

dă hrană celor flămânzi. Domnul dezleagă pe cei ferecaţi în obezi; Domnul îndreaptă pe cei gârboviţi, Domnul înţelepţeşte orbii, Domnul iubeşte pe cei drepţi, Domnul păzeşte pe cei străini; pe orfani şi pe văduvă va sprijini şi calea păcătoşilor o va pierde.

I have compared the 1710 edition with that of 1688, as the latter was the closest version to it – the differences from earlier versions, the Bălgrad *Psalter* (1651) or the Dosoftei's *Psaltirea de-nţăles* [=the Understandable Psalter] (1680) were even more obvious. On the other hand, the *Anthimian/Damaskinian* edition took the older versions into account as well: I have stressed below the words from these two earlier versions which appear in an identical or adapted form, in the next edi-tions, yet not in the *Psalms* of the 1688 Bucharest *Bible*.

Ps. 51:1, 4-8 (LXX 3, 7-11)

1651	*1680*
Ce te lauzi în răutate, **putearnice**?	Ce te lauz cu rău **putiarnicule**.
(…)	(…)

Derept aceea Dumnezău răsipi-te-va în veaci, lua-te-va şi te va smulge de sălaşul tău şi te va dezrădăcina den pământul viilor.

Vedea-vor direpţii (aceasta) şi să vor **teame** şi de el râde-vor (zicând): Iată omul carele nu puse pre Dumnezău tărie şie, ce să încredea în mulţimea bogăţiilor sale; s-au întărit în deşertăciunea sa. Iar eu voiu fi ca un maslin înfrunzit în casa lui Dumnezeu; nedejduiiu în mila lui Dumnezeu în veac şi în vecii de veac. Ispovedi-mă-voiu Ţie în veac, că ai făcut (**aceasta**) şi voiu **aştepta** numele Tău, că-i bun înaintea milostivnicilor Tăi

Drept **aciasta**, Dumnezău omorâ-te-va în **sfârşit**, rumpete-va şi muta-te-va dela sălaşul tău, şi **rădăcina** ta din ţara viilor.

Vedia-vor direpţii şi **tiame**-s-or şi de dânsul râde-vor şi vor zâce: Iaca omul, care n-au pus pre Dumnăzău agiutoriu şie, ce nedejdiuit-au pre mulţâmia **bogăţâiei** sale, şi s-au răzâmat pre deşertăciunia sa. Iar eu ca maslinul *rodit* în casa lui Dumnăzău, nedejdiuiiu spre mila lui Dumnăzău în veac şi în veac de veac.

Mărturisimă-voi ţie în veac că feceşti, şi răbdu numele tău, că cei bine denaintia **cuvioşilor** tăi

Ps. 145, 5-9

1651

1680

Fericitu-i acela ce-i Dumnezeul lui Iacov agiutoriu lui, şi cui-i nădeajdea în Domnul Dumnezăul său:

Cela ce-au făcut ceriul şi pământul, marea şi toate ce-s întru eale; Carele-ş păzeaşte adevărul în veac, Cela ce face giudeţ obidiţilor, acela ce dă

Fericitu-i, căruia Dumnăzăul lui Iacov, agiutoriu lui, nediajdia lui, pre domnul Dumnăzăul său

Care fiace ceiul, şi pământul, maria, şi toate ce-s întrânse.

Carele păziaşte adevărătatia în veac, care face giudeţ asupriţilor, care dă hrană,

hrană flămânzilor; Domnul dezleagă prinşii. Domnul luminează orbii, Domnul rădică căzuţii, Domnul iubeaşte derepţii. Domnul păzeaşte nimearnicii, săracul şi vădua socoteaşte-i; şi calea păcătoşilor **piarde-o-va**.

flămânziţolor. Domnul dezleagî **ferecaţii**, Domnul **înţălepţeazî** orbii, Domnul **rădicî surupaţii**, Domnul iubiaşte direpţii. Domnul feriaşte nemeriţii, săracul, şi vădova sprijeniva, şi calia păcătoşilor **va piarde**.

We think no further proof is needed for the change the 1710 edition makes from the previous texts – it was demonstrated, in fact, clearly enough, indirectly, by the investigations of Alexandra Roman[25], and others, too[26]. On the contrary, it remains to be seen to what extent the 1710 version is still dependent on that of 1688, as an intermediary stage – whose innovative approach was accomplished by the 1725 edition: while, for instance, 1688 edition uses (in Ps. 5:1 or Ps. 142:1) the verbal phrase 'bagă în urechi' [=put into ears], 1710 edition only changes it to another loan translation, 'ia în urechi'[=take into ears] (like the older 1651 edition), and only in 1725 is the more natural and simple verb 'ascultă' [=listen] finally chosen (following in fact the 1680 edition); likewise, in Ps. 1:1, 'n-a mers' [=din't go] from 1688 is preserved in 1710, only to be changed to the current 'n-a umblat' [=din't walk] from 1725 on.

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[25] Roman, *Filiations* and Roman, *Unification*.

[26] Gianina Picioruş points out places where not only an adaptation was made, but a new translation – as in Ps. 7:13-14. Even though she speaks about the presence of the *Psalms* in the *Didaches*, she analyses the 1710 version, to which the preacher referred to – Picioruş, *Didaches*, p. 42.

II. The mechanism of standardisation

We have to discuss the factors that have given such longevity to this text and, finally, the question of the authorship of the Anthimian revision, the Romanian National Psalter.

Among the reasons that made the 1710 edition a "standard" that could be mentioned are those suggested by Barbu Teodorescu as relates to the authority of Damaskinian texts: "their scientific importance, since they reproduce accurately the Greek text", "their wide spreading, across the whole country, throughout the XVIIIth century", and "their valour acquired by the Romanian language they employed"[27]. We will try to provide here some further explanations.

The reliance on *Septuagint*

The religious texts of those times had already witnessed a turning point regarding the traductological approach, by conforming to the scientific spirit of humanism: it had become important *why* a translation was made and *how* its source was chosen[28]. Ever since Dositheus, we see the tendency of the Romanian translators to claim belonging to the "Great Church" and to emphasize the use of Greek sources[29] – while the former Slavonic sources were not always made mention of[30]. Given that the Hellenism was the cultural option favoured even by the new historical context as well, in situations where the option for the original sources required the tearing away from the official Slavonic phrases, the improvement was easily defended – like Anthimus did, in the preface of the 1706 *Molitvelnic* [=The

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[27] *Ibidem*, p. 642.

[28] Cândea, *Milescu*, p. 30.

[29] Iorga, *Hist. Church,* vol. I, p. 409.

[30] Lapedatu, p. 6-7.

Priest's Prayer Book][31], and others, too[32]. Besides, the new versions translated from the primary sources of the Eastern tradition had higher chances to remain unchanged for a long time. As for the reception by the public, certainly, there could have been no other time more fitting than that period of the Romanian-Hellenic bilingualism of the educated classes[33].

The good circulation of the books

The spreading of Anthimus' *Psalter* went along with the boom that the art of printing witnessed in those times (after it seemed to have died in the first half of the XVIIth century[34], post-Dositheus), particularly due to Anthimus, who, in his turn, formed students [35], that spread beyond the boundaries of Wallachia[36]. In fact, all this prelate did was connected with the

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[31] "*Însă să știi și aciasta, că de vei cerceta pre amăruntulu rânduialele și tălmăcire acestui Molitvelnicu, și de vei potrivi cu niscare izvoade slovenești, veri de unde ar fi typărite, și nu să va potrivi, să nu te pripești îndată a defăima, căci noi amu urmatu Molitvelnicului grecescu*" [=But you should also know this, that if you search in detail the rituals and rendering of this *Molitvelnic*, and if you compare it with some Slavonic sources, no matter where printed, do not be in a hurry to label, since we have followed the Greek *Molitvelnic*] – note at the end of Anthimus' Târgoviște *Molitvelnic* of 1713 (BRV, vol. I, p. 551).

[32] "*Au tălmăcit și au îndreptat drept de pe cel grecesc Penticostariu, ca să nu se facă sminteală rânduielii grecești și zăticneală limbii românești*" [=They have rendered and corrected directly by the Greek *Penticostarion*, so as not to impair the Greek ritual and not to hamper the Romanian language] – appendix of Lavrentios the hieromonk, the proofreader of the 1743 *Penticostarion* [=Book of Easter Hymns] printed by Bishop Climent [Clement] at Râmnic (BRV, vol. II., p. 74).

[33] Cf. Iorga, *Ist. lit.*, p. 461, 489-490. In Brâncoveanu's time, "the knowledge of the Greek language becomes more general", then, after the installation of the first Fanariote ruler, the language is "better and better and more generally known".

[34] Ştrempel, *Russia typ.*, p. 16-17. After Dosoftei.

[35] Del Chiaro, p. 27.

[36] Iorga, *Ist. lit.*, p. 467.

printing[37], the art in which his skill was perfect, as the testimonies of the time agree[38], and we can see today by his achievements: beautiful books, with elegant letters, of various sizes, on pages of different formats (the 1710 *Psalter* was issued in a peculiar format, pocket size, economic and handy[39]), for which he was even accused of "witchcraft"[40]. The circulation of Anthimian printings of Târgoviște was not confined to Wallachia. Besides the copy of the 1710 Psalter belonging to the Romanian Academy Library, acquired in 1960, and the other one, first known of (that reached far eastward, to the V.I. Lenin Library in Moscow, of which Romanian Library also has a photocopy), the Anthimian edition was also recorded beyond the mountains, in Transylvania: in Apoldu de Jos[41], and, nowadays, some Târgoviște printings can be found at the Sebeș Museum (collected from the surrounding region – the villages on the Secașelor Plateau and the Sebeș Valley), including a copy of the Anthimian *Psalter*[42].

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[37] Ghenadie, *Holy Register*, p. 115. "With regards to the merits of Anthimus, we say that this prelate was inseparable from the printing works. In Snagov he had a printing works, likewise in Râmnic and then at the Metropolitanate of Ungro-Wallachia."

[38] Del Chiaro, p. 142: "He was endowed with rare talents" and "he raised the art of printing to perfection".

[39] Molin, *Anthimus*, p. 827. Anthimus was a "thrifty publisher" who knew how to offer an incentive to the rich, turning them into "publishers founders".

[40] Del Chiaro, p. 142; Iorga, *Hist. litt.*, p. 472.

[41] Iorga, Nicolae, *Scrisori și inscripții ardelene și maramureșene*, vol. II, Socec, București, 1906, p. 40, *apud.* Teodorescu, *Psalter*, p. 518. Iorga holds that the respective volume was published in 1709, but Teodorescu corrects him.

[42] It is reported on the institution's website, and it was catalogued by Eva Mârza.

The plain and churched language

Alexandra Roman also asserted that the "prestige" of the prototype-version is due to the "supple and natural" language[43]. Indeed, by simple men like Anthimus[44], for the first time a language spoken by the people and fashioned by the ecclesiastical milieu[45] was introduced in printed books[46].

Yet another decisive aspect must be taken into account in order to understand the compelling authority of the Anthimian *Psalter* of 1710. In those times, the *Psalms* was no longer a mere book of personal worship, as Lapedatu thinks [47] (though Anthimus added, in 1684, for the first time, the now ordinary hymns and prayers between the cathismas), but it entered a more general liturgical circuit – it is, in fact, the only biblical book used in all services and ceremonials of the Orthodox Church.[48]

And it is worth noting that the year in which the prototype-edition was issued is the same when, as "it is commonly known" ("e de obşte ştiut")[49], for the first time, "a început a intra, din vreme în vreme, citirea românească prin biserici" [="the Romanian reading began entering the churches, from time to time" – that is, the services were officiated in Romanian language] in

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[43] Roman, *Filiations*, p. 241.

[44] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 628. See also the self-description, even though made with humility, by Anthimus, in *Works*, p. 6.

[45] Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 115.

[46] Teodorescu considers this assertion of Iorga mainly with regards to Damaskinos. Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 643.

[47] Lapedatu, p. 6.

[48] Tit Simedrea, *Evangel*, p. 1112.

[49] Nifon, *Typikon*, p. VIII. Del Chiaro, too, remarks, in the *Revolutions of Wallachia* (1718), that "in some churches the service is officiated in the Wallachian language" and "this innovation was introduced lately" – Del Chiaro, p. 51.

Wallachia (which controlled the Orthodox Church in Transylvania, as well). In the example above, some small differences can be noticed in Psalm 145, from the text of the last Synodal edition. But, not uncommonly, churches still use the old form of the Psalm, perfectly intelligible now, having survived in the liturgical books since the 1713 *Psaltichia* [=Psalmody Manual] of Philotheus Sfetagoreţul [=*the Athonite,* Slavophonic form].

As, ever since 1650, some Romanian chants were performed, at the left lecterns in the churches, the Psalms that were more often used in the service could have been circulated in loose handwritten leaves, meant to the Psalm-readers[50]. However, at the end of the 1710 edition, the Psalms of *Polyeleos* were still printed in Slavonic, "înadins" [=purposely], "pentru darea îndemâna cântării" [=for the handiness of the chanting][51]. But in only a matter of a few years, by establishing the obligatory character of service in Romanian[52] and due to the development of psalmody (encouraged by the voivod[53]), the newly accepted Romanian version was about to attain classic status, in the shape of that date. The more so as in the following period, under the Phanariots, emerged no *new elites of a comparable stature* with those who produced the established version.[54]

III. The Anthimus' *seal*

Of course, the question has to be raised whether or not the author of such a successful and long lasting revision could have

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[50] Barbu Bucur, *Monuments I*, p. 1070; Barbu Bucur, *Monumente II*, p. 493.

[51] BRV, vol. IV, p. 38.

[52] As we find out from the *Octoih mic* [=litlle *Octoechos*, Lectern Hymn Book], handwritten by the psalm-reader Moldavschi in 1738, "recently", the Romanian service had became compulsory, so the demand for liturgical books also increased abruptly – Barbu Bucur, *Monuments I*, p. 1071.

[53] Barbu Bucur, *Teaching*, p. 488.

[54] Iorga, *Hist. litt.*, p. 489: "The period 1730-1780 is much less important than the one preceding it".

been someone else but Anthimus the Iberian himself. This question may seem rhetorical, but it is not a simple one.

When it comes to the authorship of the translations in that period, things cannot be thoroughly elucidated, and specialists' opinions vary significantly. Each one of the notable personalities of the time is referred to as translator, and credited, separately, by researchers, with as much as possible: apparently, each one would have translated all the texts. The books of the time usually don't mention the authors of the translations and revisions. Instead, they have the habit[55] of disclosing the sponsor and, more discretely, the typographic proofreader – the 'diortositor'. "Silinţa" [=the effort] of the printing, "osteneala diortosirii" [=the pain of proofreading], or "îndreptarea cuvintelor româneşti" [=the correction of Romanian words] still doesn't mean 'translation'[56]. On the other hand, we find in the anthimian service books (*Psalter* of 1694 and of 1710, *Molitvelnic* of 1706 and 1713, and the 1715 *Ceaslov* [=Book of Hours][57] – which includes Psalms and other biblical passages, as well), a continuous translation polishing process[58], a silent improvement of the prayers' texts from one edition to another[59]. We can say that in the case of Anthimus the humanist spirit was not that

[55] Anthimus, *Works*, p. 369. In the dedication of the Sevastos Kyminitis' *Eortologhion*, printed in Greek at Snagov in 1701, Anthimus mentioned that there is "obiceiu să se închine la o persoană mai însemnată sau bisericească sau politică spre recomandarea şi apărarea cărţii" [=a custom to be dedicated to a person of prominence, eiher religious or political, for the recommendation and defence of the book].

[56] Ţepelea, *Menaia*, p. 260.

[57] Vasile Mihoc notices that in this *Ceaslov* "the Psalms appear in a form in fact identical to those in the present-day Romanian Psalter" – Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p.115.

[58] Mazilu, *Anthimus*, p. 182.

[59] Either because he "mastered better and better the Romanian language as the time passed" (Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 115), or because it was his style: "perfectionist" and not interested in literary hoarding – Picioruş, *Didaches*, p. 90-92.

scientific as to be concerned with acknowledging the author's merits[60]. All typographic activity was subordinated by him to the superior spiritual interests[61].

Damaskinos translated, Anthimus rooted traditions

As far as the 1706 *Molitvelnic* [=Priest's Prayer Book] *is concerned*, there seems to be a consensus that the translation belongs to Anthimus[62] – although even there it was said that it used the previous endeavour of Dositheus[63]. Nicolae Iorga is, however, of opinion that Damaskinos the Doctor was the author of all service books printed by Anthimus[64], not willing to see the 1706 *Molitvelnic* edition as anything new[65]. Truth be told, we don't have explicit testimonies that Anthimus was himself effectively engaged in their translation, despite the fact that many researchers consider that this aspect of his work goes without saying. The most important testimony, itself to some extent subject to interpretation, is given by the printing worker Mihail Iştvanovici, in the preface of the above-mentioned *Molitvelnic*:

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[60] Barbu Bucur, *Monuments II*, p. 489. Anthimus doesn't mention the author and the translator of *Floarea darurilor* [=Flower of gifts], but only the voivod, the Metropolitan and the sponsor.

[61] See footnote 92.

[62] Faifer, *Dictionary, p.* 43. See also Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 110.

[63] Mazilu, *Anthimus*, p. 177-178.

[64] Iorga, *Hist. Church*, vol. II, p. 101: "The three Romanian books that Anthimus publishes at his expense in 1712 and 1713 have, of course, no other author, although we don't understand how Damaskinos, now bishop of Râmnic, accepted that his works be taken under other's name, like when he was a mere scholar". In fact, as Sebastian Barbu Bucur also notices, this custom of humility was reserved to simple monks, not to bishops as well (Barbu Bucur, *Monumente II*, p. 484). But Iorga describes Damaskinos as an "industrious translator of books that were not signed by him" (Iorga, *Hist. litt.*, p. 464).

[65] See footnote 88.

"Ci din dumnezeiasca râvnă ai fostu pornit, ca şi aciasta folositoare de suflete carte ce să numeşte Molitvelnic, la lumină în limba noastră rumânească să o scoţi pentru folosulu de obşte"[=But, by the divine zeal you was moved so that even this useful-for-the-souls book which is called Molitvelnic, into our Romanian language you brought to light, for the common benefit[66]. (A little more specific is the note of Anton-Marie del Chiaro, yet it refers to the translation, made by the Metropolitan, of the *Philosophical Parables*, issued in 1713[67].) Others are convinced of the fact that Anthimus dealt only with choosing and selecting the texts for printing [68], personally assuming the responsibility for the task of rendering into Romanian the services, for which he had the tacit endorsement of the voivod**[69]**. Around Anthimus there were not few translators[70], the same as, in Buzău, for the 1698 *Mineie* [=Menaia, Monthly Service Books] credited to Bishop Metrophanes, other labourers worked, while the hierarch was only the chief printer[71]. Those who concerned themselves with Filotheus the Athonite are convinced he was not only the translator of the entire *Catavasier* [=Book of Hymns], as well as of the other lectern books[72], particularly as the famous Psalm reader openly[73] declares he personally worked

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[66] BRV, vol. I, p. 542.

[67] Del Chiaro, p. 27. See also BRV, vol. I, p. 487-489. And in fact there are also some doubts. Gabriel Ştrempel (*Anthimus*, p. 299) considers that the statement of the sponsor, "Am pus nevoinţă de s-au tălmăcit această carte"[= I've put effort for this book to be rendered], would eliminate Anthimus' contribution.

[68] Mihoc, *Anthimus,* p. 110.

[69] Mazilu, *Anthimus*, p. 180.

[70] Besides the Greceanu brothers, the monk Filotheus, the unknown Cosmas, the clerk Vlad, the Polish Alexandre the Scholar and Daniel of Câmpulung – Iorga, *Hist. litt. XVIII*, p. 434-435.

[71] BRV, vol. I, p. 368.

[72] Barbu Bucur, *Monuments II*, p. 490.

[73] "*Pentru aceasta şi eu smeritul, văzând cum că în fieştecare zi în sfintele lui Hristos Biserici, adecă să cântă Catavasiile Sărbătorile celor stăpâneşti şi ale Maicii lui*

on the translation of the chants. But the most important translator of that period should probably be deemed Damaskinos, who, in his turn, says explicitly he rendered service books[74]. Even though he maintains he began this work in only 1715[75], we can see he was active as far back as 1688, as a member of the team who worked on the *Bible*[76], while his defenders assume he started the translations already in the time of Theodosius[77] – that is, before 1708. While at Buzău, he published, in fact, the 1704 *Apostol* [=Book of the Apostles], and, previously, he had translated other books as well, without signing them[78].

Dumnezeu, iar să înțeleg foarte de puținei, cât numai viersul sunt ascultând, iar nu și înțelesu celor ce se cântă, tălmăcit-am după puțina mea putere pre a noastră de țară și de obște limbă, toate Catavasiile, cu Troparele și cu Condacele și cu Hvalitele ale fiește-căruia praznic Stăpânesc, cu rânduiala Utrănelor și a câte trele liturghiile și cu irmoasele cele veselitoare și cu Paraclisul Precistei și cu toate trebuincioasele cântări, ce să cântă preste tot anul' [=This is why I, too, the humble, seeing that in every day in the holy churches of Christ the Katavasias of the festivals of the Lord and of the Mother of God are chanted, but they are understood by very few, so the people are just listening to the melody and not the meaning of what is chanted, I've rendered according to my little ability into our language of the country and common, all the Katavasias, with the Troparia and Kondakia and with the Hvalites of each lordly festival, with the ritual of the Matins, and of all three Liturgies, and with the gladdening irmoses, and with the Paraclysis of the Holy Virgin and with all the necessary chants which are sung over the course of the year] – Barbu Bucur, *Psalmody,* p. 164.

[74] Because "valahii noștri stau ca boii" [=our Wallachians stand like oxen] in the church, since the *Menaia* are in Slavonic – Dobrescu, *Hist. Austr.* , p. 164- 165. He aided himself, however, by the work of Dosoftei, *Viața și petreacerea svinților* [=Life and Conduit of Saints], and even by the Buzău *Menaia* edition – Țepelea, *Menaia*, p. 240-241.

[75] Dobrescu, *Hist. Austr.*, p. 165.

[76] Ghenadie, *Holy Register*, p. 13.

[77] Regleanu, *Damaskinos*, p. 446

[78] Iorga, *Hist. Church*, vol. II, p. 100. Among these books, the Buzău *Octoechos* (1700).

The Metropolitan Theodosius "had grouped in Târgoviştea all men of science and of merit, and with them he started translating of the service books"[79], and yet, these collective contributions had to be put in some order – so Metrophanes was considered the representative of the Slavonic party, Damaskinos, of the Greek one, while Anthimus was the genius[80] that had the gift of finishing off all important texts. In support of Gennadius' remark, which could seem a mere praise to Anthimus[81], reasons can be provided. For instance, the *Symbol of Faith*, translated, in Wallachia, as early as the end of the XVIIth century, then recited officially (in a new form) for the first time by Theodosius, and then updated (but incomplete) by Damaskinos, on his appointment, remained, in its integral form, official and definitive, from Anthimus' recitation[82]. The same happened with the prayer *Our*

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[79] Ghenadie, *Holy Register*, p. 92.

[80] *Ibidem*, p. 100.

[81] He was not canonized until 1992, and in the past, some historians, including Iorga, tended to neglect or to criticize his work.

[82] *Ibidem*, p. 94. After Metropolitan Stephen of Ungro-Wallachia translated for the first time the Symbol of Faith (that the hierarchs, on their installation, recited previously in Slavonic), but without reciting it in the church, his successor, Metropolitan Theodosius, uttered, on his appointment (1688), a free translation of the Greek idioms of the Symbol (among other things, approximating 'fiinţă' [=essence] to be 'fire' [nature]), and his formula was repeated by his successors and by the bishops of Transylvania ordained in Wallachia, until, on the installation of Damaskinos the Doctor as bishop of Buzău (1703) we find another version, the current one, but limited to the first article of the Creed only. It is only since the ordination of Anthimus at Râmnic that the first translation of the Symbol is preserved – in the current form, and officially recited in the Church. Anthimus only alters here some equivalent forms such as 'Părintele' [=the Parent] instead of 'Tatăl' [=the Father] and translates 'de la' instead of 'din': 'născut *de la* Părinte, născut mai înainte de toţi vecii' and '*de la* Dumnezeu adevărat', instead of 'din Dumnezeu adevărat' (both prepositions meaning *from*). He also says only 'prin care toate *sunt făcute*', instead of 's-au făcut', '*s-au omenit*', instead of 's-a făcut om', '*supt* Pilat din Pont' instead of 'în zilele lui…', '*iar va veni*', instead of 'iarăşi va să vină', '*pre cei vii şi pre cei morţi*',

Father, different from the version of the 1688 Bucharest *Bible*[83] and with the *Gospel* in general, in regards to which Anthimus "rootes a tradition"[84] and "committed to us a basis and guide for all future editions"[85], bringing about "a decisive turning point", which all previous translations only "prepared for"[86]. The same, with the other important texts of the Old Testament, the *Paremias*[87], as well as with the form of the prayers in *Molitvelnic*, established by the anthimian editions, though with "borrowings" and "influences" from the Moldavian Dositheus' 1681 *Molitvelnic de'nţăles* [=Understandable Priest's Prayer Book][88] and, last but not least, with the text of the *Liturgy*, which existed, in a poetically well wrought form, from the same

instead of 'viii şi morţii', "*are sfârşit*", instead of 'nu va avea...' But, finally, in the 1715 *Catavasier* of Târgovişte, Anthimus bequeathes us the current form of the Symbol.

[83] Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 113, 115. In fact, in *Our Father* of 1703 we read some phrases that could be found in 1688 *Bible* as well: 'şi ne lasă nouă datoriile noastre cum lăsăm şi noi datornicilor noştri', and 'să nu ne duci pe noi în bântuială' – phrases that could be found in 1688 *Bible* as well. But in the 1715 *Ceaslov*, we already see the current form, with the only alteration 'pâinea noastră cea de-a pururea', that Anthimus had tried to modify from the 1688 edition, where already 'de toate zilele', the current form, existed.

[84] Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 114.

[85] Tit Simedrea, *Evangel*, p. 1117.

[86] *Ibidem*, p. 1111.

[87] Improved in the 1705 *Antologhion* [=Antology] – Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 115.

[88] Mazilu, *Anthimus*, p. 180. Iorga claims that "the 1706 *Molitvelnic* sticks to the old aspect of the prayer books for priests" (Iorga, *Hist. Church.*, vol. II, p. 100) – maybe because it did not fit his idea of 'the translator of Anthimus': a book of him is published at Râmnic, while Damaskinos could have published it himself, at Buzău. In fact, there is a progress from the 1706 *Molitvelnic* edition of Râmnic to that of Târgovişte in 1712. However, the language differences between the 1706 edition and that of Dosoftei are much more evident: 'Şi Ţie slavă înălţăm/*trimitem*', 'şi în vecii vecilor/şi în *veci de veci*'), 'robul lui Dumnezeu/*şerbul* lui Dumnezeu' etc.

Dositheus (1679), but was finished off by the Anthimus' revision only[89].

The case of the *Psalter* only completes the whole picture of anthimian work: here too, the Metropolitan undertook the final revision, "rooting a tradition", probably by virtue of the sense that he, although a foreigner, paradoxically, mastered a superior Romanian language[90] – even though in 1694 maybe it was not still the case[91], in 1710 it undoubtedly was, and we have as proof his superb *Didahiile* [=the *Didaches*], preached since 1709.

All the merits of Anthimus would certainly remain intact

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[89] Mazilu, *Anthimus*, p. 178: "The Liturgy in Dosoftei's translation, although a poetry of indisputable quality, remained among the monument of the old Romanian writing. Sunday by Sunday, and whenever the Holy Liturgy is celebrated, Romanians listen to Anthimus, up to current times." The phrasing differences of formulas are, indeed, visible: 'Pre înșine și unii pre-alalț și toată viața noastră lui Hristos Dumnezău pre samă să o dăm/*Pre noi înșine și unul pe altul și toată viața noastră lui Hristos Dumnezeu să o dăm*'; 'Prin îndurătățile a Singur-Născutul Tău Fiiu, Cu carele blagoslovit ești, împreună cu Preasvântul și bunul și viață făcătoriul Tău Duh, acmu și pururi și în veci de veci/*Cu îndurările unuia născut Fiului Tău, cu carele împreună biue ești cuvântat, cu preasfântul și bunul și de viață făcătoriul Tău Duh, acum și pururea și în veacii veacilor*'; 'Să-ndrăgim unii pre-alalți, ca împreună de gând să mărturisim/*Să iubim unul pre altul ca într-un gând să mărturisim*'; 'Acel de biruire cântec cântând, strigând, chemând și grăind/*Cântare de biruință cântând, strigând, glas înălțând și grăind*'; 'svânta Anaforă/*sfânta jărtvă*'; 'despuitorule om iubitoriule/*stăpâne iubitorule de oameni*'; 'lung zâlit/*întru zile îndelungate*'; 'păciuită/*cu pace*', 'păvață și feritori/*îndreptătoriu și păzitoriu*'; 'rămășița timpului vieții noastre/*cealaltă vreme a vieții noastre*'; 'creștinești obârșiile/*sfârșit creștinesc*' etc. – cf. Dosoftei, *Liturgy* and the anthimian *Liturghier* [=Liturgy Book] of Târgoviște.

[90] See Mihoc, *Anthimus*, p. 114 – where two more arguments are provided: the good knowledge of the Scriptures (of its Greek source), and the knowledge of the Patristic interpretative tradition.

[91] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 634. "It is difficult to admit that Anthimus the Iberian knew in 1694 that much Romanian, so that he could translate the Psalter, which is a literary work, in the first place." Nevertheless, in the light of recent discoveries regarding the period previously spent by Anthimus in Moldavia, this argument is not valid anymore.

even though it would be proven that its role was only to stimulate and to do justice to the abilities of others. A text of Anthimus published as an introduction to the Greek "Eortologion" (1701, by Sevastos Kyminitis), shows his openness to all the contributions of his contemporaries[92]. Even without translating anything, just by identifying and using of the proper texts, his contribution to the progress of the Romanian literary language was major. However, the question of priority between him and Damaskinos in translating the ecclesiastical texts remains contested. The latter sometimes seems to reprint what Anthimus has already published, like in the case of the *Psalms* or of the *Gospel* – where we see that Damaskinos' modifications are not always accepted, [93] –, at other times Damaskinos precedes Anthimus, as in the case of the *Creed*, or he translates independently of him, as he did with the 1704

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[92] "Deci şi eu, pentru că nu am altă putere spre ajutorul aproapelui decât ocupaţiunea tipografiei, n-am lipsit şi nu voi lipsi vreodată ca să folosesc, după putinţa mea, pe fraţii în Hristos ai mei, tipărind deosebite cărţi de suflet folositoare şi mântuitoare. De aceea, fiindcă am găsit şi această carte (…), pe care cetind-o şi cunoscând după judecata mea că este prea mult de trebuinţă şi folositoare (…) mai cu seamă că este compusă în limba uşoară şi uşoară de priceput, am voit s-o tipăresc…" [=So even I, having no other power towards helping the neighbour, but the occupation of type setting, I haven't failed, and I won't fail to be useful to my brothers in Christ, by printing various books useful for the soul and saving. That is why, having found this book, too (...), which, by reading it I realised that, in my judgement, it is exceedingly necessary and useful (...), especially as it is drawn up in the easy language and it is easy to understand, I wanted to print it…] – Anthimus, *Works*, p. 368. Likewise, we see how Anthimus insisted the son of the ruler Constantin Brâncoveanu give him for publishing a Greek rendering of Plutarch's *The Parallel Lives* – *ibidem*, p. 372.

[93] Tit Simedrea, *Evangel*, p. 1118. Damaskinos writes, in John 1,1, 'întru început era cuvântul', in his translation of Teofilact's *Tâlcuirea Evangheliilor* [=Gospel Interpretation]. But Lavrentios himself does not accept this innovation and leaves 'la început era cuvântul', in the 1746 *Evangel* edition of Râmnic. However, this *Evangel* could be named "Anthimus-Damaskinos", and it has a richer form than that of 1697 – *ibidem*, p. 1118.

rendering of the *Apostolos*.

However, the biggest contribution to the spreading of the anthimian version of the *Psalter* was from the printing works in Râmnic, where the "second edition"[94] of the prototype, the 1725 *Psalter*, now loaded with the authority of Damaskinos, "dascălul cel mare" [=the great scholar/doctor][95] (whose disciples didn't dare to alter a single word he wrote[96]), became a standard. The books printed in Râmnic reached the other Romanian principality, Moldavia[97] not only in the capital Iaşi[98], but in the counties as well (where they numbered hundreds[99]), while they reached Transylvania easily[100] enough, especially as the printing works of the ecclesiastical centre was, for two decades, the only Orthodox one in the Habsburg Empire[101] – so that, in turn, the Râmnic *Psalter* became the prototype for those of Sibiu and Buda[102], and that is why the Greek Catholic Samuil Micu included it, integrally, in its 1795 *Bible* of Blaj[103].

[94] The fact that Damaskinos publishes an anthimian edition as "the second one" draws the supposition that he might have a say even in the first edition as well, as Barbu Teodorescu believes, too (cf. Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 634).

[95] BRV, vol. II, p. 92 – The comment of the proofreader Lavrentios the Hieromonk on the 1746 *Evangel*.

[96] See, for instance, the prefaces to the *Antologion* of Râmnic (1737), signed by the proofreader Lavrentios the Hieromonk, or the one to the *Triod* [=*Triodion*, Lent Hymn Book] printed by Innocentius in 1731 (BRV, vol. II., p. 52-53 and, respectively, 42-44).

[97] The area from whence he came to Wallachia, and with which he must have maintained tight connections (See Anthimus, *Correspodence* – the *Preface*, by Archim. Michail Stanciu, p. 8). Even his language should have been understandable to the Wallachians and Moldavians, to the same extent.

[98] Teodorescu, *Circulation*, p. 170.

[99] Teodorescu, *Damaskinos*, p. 642.

[100] Teodorescu, *Circulation*, p. 170, 184.

[101] Turdeanu, p. 186.

[102] Teodorescu, *Psalter*, p. 527.

[103] See also Chindriș, *Vulgata*, p. LXXIII.

So, it certainly remains to be considered more thoroughly, for the future, the question of the relationship between Anthimus and Damaskinos, as well as between Târgoviște books and the other printings of Anthimus' time and of the next period, or, on the other hand, between the printings and the manuscript in circulation at that same time, including those of Filotheus. It also would be relevant to examine the circulation of Târgoviște books and Râmnic in the Romanian provinces, on the basis of their presence in the local libraries. As for the detailed differences between edition 1710 and 1725 or the subsequent ones, this is worth being the subject of another paper[104].

Romanian Synodal Psalter is a venerable version, especially as it was worked on by such an important prelate who eventually became a martyr (in 1716, being canonised in 1992)[105]. But it would not be a sign of respect to discontinue the work of improving his phrases, if needed, within the framework of his corpus, since Anthimus only worked on his version in haste, among many other texts that waited to be rendered in the vernacular Romanian, in his short period of literary activity for Romanians.

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[104] They were examined in the article: *The History of the Most Stable Romanian Liturgical Text. A Comparative Study Regarding the Editions of the "National Psalter"* – published in "Literature, Discourse and Multicultural Dialogue", III, 2015/section: Language and Discourse p. 961-973, subsequently included on the portal diacronia.ro, and (included) in our PhD thesis, (*Psaltirea Națională* [=National Psalter], Pitești, 2017, 2019, p. 134-164).

[105] Nevertheless, it underwent a superficial revision in 1957 – see our thesis, *National Psalter*, p. 159-164.

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